Violet: Or, the Cross and the Crown

Maria Jane McIntosh

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Violet: Or, the Cross and the Crown

Maria Jane McIntosh

VIOLET;

OR,

THE CROSS AND THE CROWN.

BY

M. J. McINTOSH,

AUTHOR OF "TWO LIVES, OR TO SEEM AND TO BE;" "CHARMS AND COUNTER CHARMS," ETC. ETC.

"Take heart! who bears the cross to-day,
Shall wear the crown to-morrow."

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To

W. H. APPLETON,

President of the New York Publishers' Association,

AS A TESTIMONIAL,

SLIGHT IT MAY BE, YET SINCERE, OF HER GRATITUDE, FOR THE GENEROUS ENCOURAGEMENT WHICH, MORE THAN TEN YEARS AGO, RE-NERVED HER SINKING HEART AND FAILING HAND,

AND OF

THE JUDICIOUS COUNSEL WHICH HAS SINCE GUIDED HER TO SUCH SUCCESS AS SHE HAS ATTAINED,

This Book

IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,

BY HIS FRIEND

THE AUTHOR.

VIOLET;

OR,

THE CROSS AND THE CROWN.

CHAPTER I.

"Blow, wind! come wrack!"
MACBETH.

"'T is my vocation, Hal; — 't is no sin for a man to labor in his vocation."
KING HENRY IV.

EASTWARD, sea and sky; westward, a long strip of sandy beach, its monotonous surface varied only by the drifting heaps which the wind raises to-day and sweeps away to-morrow. Such, for many miles, is the aspect of the New Jersey coast.

An ocean inlet, setting up into the land about a mile, and then spreading, north and south, into shallow lagoons, separates these beaches from the main land. In these lagoons islands of reeds spring up, and the scum of mucilaginous weeds attracts all the varieties of water-fowl, in their season, giving life, by their noisy gabble, to the solitary scene.

Even on these narrow strips of sand, man has found a dwelling and an occupation.

Passing through Monmouth county, in a southwardly direction, the traveller soon leaves behind him the few scattered farms, the occupants of which eke out the precarious and scanty living derived from them with the produce of the sea. The sandy beach is now before him. He passes, here and there, a rude dwelling; then, for a long space, he meets

no object, save, perchance, the bows of some forgotten ship, half buried in the sand. At length, as he approaches the inlet, the huge form of what appears more like Noah's ark than any other building of which history or art has preserved a reminiscence, rises before him. It is a ship of the largest dimensions, her keel and hulk deeply imbedded in the sands on which she had been driven up at high tide, and which had so accumulated, under her shelter, as to form a firm foothold even on her outer side. A peaked roof covers her deck. The great gap in her side, through which so many souls passed out to judgment, forms a door for her present inhabitants. Within this strange abode, the rudest furniture stands side by side with polished rose-wood, and carving and gilding such as had tasked the skill of the best foreign artists. In the stump of the ship's mast, about twenty feet above the deck, her cross-trees had been fastened; and thither, at set of sun, or in the early dawn, the master of this bizarre dwelling and his rude associates were accustomed to ascend by a ladder, and, with an excellent glass, sweep both sea and shore, for signs of comers and goers.

What a glorious view must often have presented itself to them, from this point, as, on a clear, bright day, the sun bared his broad brow in the east, while the sea flamed with his fiery light! Northward, the long, barren beach lay like a bar set by the hand of the Creator against the encroachments of the sea; on the west, the water-fowl rose in airy circles from the surface of the lagoon, or beat in long procession down the bay, their white forms relieved against the dark pine forests of the main land; and on the south, the waters of the inlet and the low shore beyond raised themselves in the mirage, like countries in the skies. Yet this was not the scene these rude men best loved to look upon. With greater avidity and gayer hope did they hurry to their look-out when storms were abroad; when ocean, tossed by an easterly wind, was one sheet of foam; when the long breakers, — so long that the eye could see no ter-

mination to them up or down the straight coast, — rolling shorewards, would pause for an instant on the very edge of the beach, as if to gather all their strength, and then hurl themselves on shore with a report like the boom of a cannon, and a shock that would rock the bedded ship to her centre. At such times, the spray would fling itself far across the ship, and often fall, in long, whip-like lashes, into the lagoon beyond; the very earth would seem invaded by breakers, which climbed, and hissed, and retreated, to be pounded back by the surges behind. The sand would be swept into new cone-like hills, along which the shoreward-driven sea-gulls, screaming, flapped their wings. God save the voyagers who drifted along those combing waves, to a shore where the heart of man was as pitiless as the barren coast he inhabited!

Those who were accustomed to look upon that scene rejoiced not at the glory, trembled not at the terrors, of the Creator, as manifested in its calm or in its terrific power. The howl of the wind and the boom of the breaker were welcome to them, for they told that wind and wave were wafting treasures to their hands. The deep was their storehouse. The shallop that lay at anchor in the inlet where the water began to shoal, and, turning northwards, found shelter from the east winds behind the point of the beach, was out in calm days, carrying the adventurous fishermen for miles up and down the coast. This, however, was her least important service. Many a trip did she make to New York, laden deep with treasures from the wrecks, which twenty years ago were driven on that shore far more frequently than now, that a better coast-police has freed the mariner from other enemies than winds and waves. Strangely mingled was the cargo of the little vessel, on such occasions. Spars and ropes and cases of wet silks, sails and cachemere cloth, barrels of fish, kegs of powder, and boxes of rich laces, were thrown together in the most heterogeneous and seemingly careless confusion, though close observation

would detect, amid all the confusion, a certain definite plan of arrangement, by which the more valuable part of the cargo was hidden beneath coarser and more bulky articles. Nor was the market value of these so widely dissimilar as it might at first be supposed; for, as the silks, laces, and cachemeres, were obtained dishonestly, they must be sold privately, and, of course, their owners must be content with what they could obtain for them from the dishonest traders who dealt in this discreditable traffic. Sometimes, though not often, the little craft did a holier work. It was not often that the waves on this wild shore left a human soul to be rescued from the wrecks which had been their sport; but this had sometimes happened, and either some remnant of humanity, or some dread of consequences, had made the wreckers, under such circumstances, play the part of deliverers to those whom they had, perchance, themselves lured within the jaws of death.

Perhaps the strangest case of such delivery on record occurred when the ship whose present position we have described was wrecked. What lights had lured her to that dangerous spot, we know not; what scenes were acted on her deck, or in her cabin, none can know till that day when the secret acts of all lives shall be disclosed. She went on shore at dead of night; and, when the morning dawned, no creature moved upon her deck, and only the dead bodies, that were thrown far up the coast by the south-easterly gale, gave token of the life that, but one day before, had stirred so busily within her. In the morning it rained heavily; the wind shifted, and by noon the sea had fallen so that the wreckers were able to reach the ship, which then lay some twenty yards from the shore; though, being driven higher by succeeding storms, it at length reached the point we have described it as occupying. They stood upon its deck; it was strewn with broken spars and torn sails. They opened the hold, and found it filled with water. They approached the cabin, and a wailing cry struck on their

ears. It was an infant's cry, and touched a chord not yet tuneless, even in these iron hearts. They hastened forward, flung open the cabin-door, and, in the imperfect light, the foremost among them stumbled over a dead body. A window was opened, and the light disclosed, under the water, which lay about two feet above the cabin-floor, the body of a young woman, beautiful even in death. There was no distortion of her countenance; nothing in her face that marked the agony of the last struggle. Closer examination showed a small but deep cut in her temple, occasioned, probably, by being thrown violently when the vessel stranded, and striking, as she fell, the jagged point of a broken earthen jar that stood near her. Whether she had severed the temple artery, and thus had bled to death, or whether she had only fainted, and the sudden rush of waters had ingulfed her while yet insensible, these men were too ignorant of the laws of life to determine. They only saw that she was dead, and gazed, with something like remorse tugging at their heart-strings, on the pale face, with its delicate, youthful features, and on the small, symmetrical form, enveloped in a dressing-gown of crimson cachemere.

But the cry which had drawn them thither was heard again; and, directed by it, they made their way to an upper berth, where, in safety from wind and wave, secured from all possibility of falling, or of being thrown out by the tossing of the ship, through the ingenious skill taught by her affection to a mother's hand, lay an infant, scarcely a year old. Her delicately fair skin was stained with weeping; her rosy lip yet quivered from that wailing cry; and her large, dark eyes were full of tears. Yet, as a human face, rough though it were, bent above her, she smiled, and held out the hands which were all that her swathing-bands left her free to move. In an instant the bands were severed, and Dick Van Dyke, lifting her in his arms, cried, "I've found, and I'll keep!"

In all that rude company, the forlorn child could not hav

made her appeal to one so likely to be touched by it as Dick Van Dyke. His strength, courage, and sagacity, made him a sort of leader or captain over these wild men; while he showed, at times, gleams of better and kindlier feelings than any in which they shared. One of his peculiarities was a love of pets; and, even now, a great Newfoundland dog was jumping upon him, as he held the infant in his arms. This quality in Dick marked, perhaps, what phrenologists would call great philoprogenitiveness. If so, Dick had been able to exercise it hitherto on unreasoning animals alone; for the only child with which Heaven had blessed him, lay buried in the church-yard of a village in the interior of New Jersey, where his wife and he had lived before idle habits and evil companionship had made him a wrecker. His companions looked now somewhat contemptuously upon the treasure he claimed, and one of them answered, "And you 're welcome! I 'd as lief have the dead mammy — she won't want feedin'."

A boisterous laugh marked that the momentary awe with which the presence of death had inspired even these rude men had passed away.

The infant was struggling, with all its little strength, to reach the dead body of the woman, which had been lifted from the floor to a settee. Dick Van Dyke placed her beside it, and, with a murmur of delight, she laid her head upon the cold bosom, and patted the marble cheek with her warm, dimpled hand. It was a sad sight — the glad, rosy child thus lying by the dead mother. Soon, however, finding its wants not attended to as usual, and suffering, no doubt, from hunger, the child uttered again a feeble wail; and Dick, snatching it up, cried, "Come! let 's carry the young un to my 'oman. The craft 's in no danger, an' we 'll ha' time enough to see to the things."

"Hello! what yer got there?" cried one of his associates; and, looking down, Dick saw that the child had fastened its hand in a gold chain that hung about the mother's neck, and

had drawn from its hiding-place in her bosom a miniature set in gold, and surrounded by brilliants. On examination, it proved to be the likeness of a gentleman, seemingly of thirty or thirty-five years of age, with a countenance remarkable for its animation and decision, dressed in what the wreckers called "regimentals;" though to what nation or class the uniform belonged, they knew not. The child laid its tiny hand upon the miniature, crying, "Papa! papa!" — the first utterance, doubtless, taught by the fond wife to her babe. With some difficulty, and by the promise of relinquishing a part of his own share of other property found on board the vessel, Dick obtained permission to keep the chain and miniature, one or two rings taken from the mother's fingers, and two large trunks containing the clothing of a lady and child. The articles in these trunks were such as the inhabitants of Squan Beach had never seen before; the fine linen and cambric edged with costly lace, and the dresses of silk, or of embroidered muslin, marking the wealth as well as the taste of the owner.

Nothing could exceed the astonishment of Katy Van Dyke at seeing the infant, which her husband brought to her as the only living creature saved from the wreck.

"Well, now — do tell — how, under the sun an' 'arth, could that come? This baby 'live, an' all them there strong men gone! I can't b'lieve you, nohow."

"Any fool can see how 't was!" was the answer. "Don't you see, the child had to stay where 't was put — in a top berth in the cabin; and the men was some washed off the deck, an' some, I s'pose, took to the boat, an' was swamped!"

This last conjecture was afterwards corroborated by finding the long-boat of the ship cast up on the beach further north. Thus the strong man had perished, trusting to his strength; while the feeble infant, abandoned to what seemed inevitable death, had been preserved by an all-ruling Providence. The rescued baby awakened a mother's half-forgotten emotions in Katy Van Dyke's heart, and was received

at once into its warmest corner. The dead mother was regarded with unwonted pity, for the sake of the living child; and Katy rested not till she had obtained Dick's consent that she should have decent, Christian burial. Accordingly, Dick was prevailed on to go in the sloop across the inlet to the little town of Barnegat for a clergyman who should perform the service.

"I don' know what sort of a parson ye'll find there," said Katy; "but, if there's a 'Piscopal, try to git him, 'cause them kind does the most o' buryin'; an', ye see, poor thing, we want to do all we can for her. An' mind, Dick, tell him to bring his gown an' his buryin'-book," she added, not altogether displeased with an opportunity of showing the neighbors, who had gathered around her, her superior knowledge in such matters.

"Gown!" cried some of the women who heard her. "A man wear a gown, Katy?"

"Yes, to be sure," answered Katy: "it's the gown makes the parson; an' a good thing, too, it is. It must be pretty tiresome to be a parson always, like them Presbyters. But the 'Piscopals understands things better: them prays in a white gown, an' them preaches in a black gown; an', then, them leaves the gown at the church, an' need n't be a parson no more, if them does n't like to, till them puts it on again."

The following day was clear and calm. The spring had been unusually mild; yet the early March sun, at mid-day, communicated only an agreeable warmth to those who had collected on the open beach to witness the funeral rites paid to the unknown dead.

The coffin had been left uncovered till the clergyman should arrive, as it was thought a mark of respect to him to permit him to look upon the face of the dead. From the clothing contained in one of the trunks, which Dick had secured, Katy Van Dyke had carefully arrayed the body for the burial — "like a lady, as she was," to use her own

expression — in silk stockings, fine linen, and a cambric wrapper edged with lace.

The clergyman gazed upon the youthful face, whose delicate features had not yet lost their loveliness, and his heart swelled, and his eyes grew moist, with visions of a home in which anxious hearts watched, and would long watch in vain, for her coming. This emotion was not lessened as he looked around on the accessories of the present scene. Out on the sandy beach, the coffin — a rough deal box — stood, supported by two stools. Around were gathered coarse men, and scarcely less coarse women, who gazed upon the dead with more of curiosity than of sympathy. The sun fell with mocking brightness upon her upturned face, and the sea broke with slow and sullen motion within a few feet of its victim — its moaning surges sounding, to his excited ear, like the low growls of some ferocious beast, disappointed of its prey. It was with a husky voice that he began to read that burial service of the Church of England, which breathes at once the sorrows of our human weakness and the divine consolations of our religious faith; but, as he repeated those sublime words, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," heart and voice grew strong; he felt, what many have felt with thankful hearts, the adaptedness of Christian faith and Christian hope to every place and every occasion; and the present, with all its painful anomalies, faded away in the contemplation of that glorious world in which the liberated spirit of the stranger might be, and he hoped was, even now, rejoicing. Solemnized and elevated by such thoughts, his voice had strange power as it rose on the still air in the words of prayer — such power, that the hard men around him uncovered and bent the head, with unaccustomed reverence.

As the services concluded, Katy Van Dyke, from a sudden impulse, held the child down to kiss, for the last time, the cheek of the dead mother. Its hunger satisfied, the beautiful child was full of glee, and laughed and clapped its

hands with delight, as it bent down toward the well-known form. The clergyman had not before seen this new claimant on his sympathy.

"Poor thing!" he cried; "is it hers?"

"It's ourn,—my man's and mine," answered Katy Van Dyke, with ready falsehood; for already she had taken the little nursling to her heart, and dreaded to have it claimed by others. The good clergyman was not suspicious of wrong; and, had he been, there was nothing in the silence of those around to corroborate his suspicions. It would never have occurred to him that to contradict Katy, and thus to interfere with Dick's appropriation of the child, would have seemed to these rude men an offence against those laws of honor, by which, as an old proverb assures us, even thieves are bound.

Dick approached to nail down the lid on the coffin.

"Have you saved a lock of hair for the friends who may one day ask after her?" inquired the clergyman, as he laid his arm across the coffin, to prevent Dick's proceeding.

"No! I declare, now, I never thought o' that!" cried Katy; "but 't an't too late; lend us your scissors, Nan." Then, pushing back the muslin cap, she exposed a head covered with soft hair of glittering brown, that gleamed like gold in the sun-light. Hastily severing one thick waving tress, she drew the cap back, and, in a cold, hard voice, said to Dick, "Nail up, now."

The grave had been dug in a spot midway between the sea and the lagoon, in an enclosure, surrounded by a rude paling, where two or three hillocks marked the places in which others had been laid to rest. It was soon filled in, and the men began to disperse. The clergyman remained near it a moment longer in silent thought; then he asked Dick, "Is there any way in which you can mark the grave?"

"Well, I thought may be it would be a good thing to

put a board up, with her name 'pon it, in case she was axed for."

"Her name! Why, do you know her name?"

"Yes, you see my wife 's a sort of a scholard, 'cause she was raised to the 'sylum, and she seed her name onter a box what had some o' her clothes in it."

On requesting to see this box, the clergyman was taken into the house by Dick, and shown one of those fancy boxes in which the French sometimes pack their finer articles of merchandise, with the English custom-house stamp, "George Rex," upon the cover. The stamp had probably been affixed years before, for it was much defaced. The box had been filled, Katy said, with the soiled clothing of a child; and the clergyman conjectured that it might have belonged to an infant's nurse, its gaudy painting being likely to attract one of that class.

"And you suppose this to have been the name of the lady?" questioned the clergyman.

"I did n't s'pose she was named George, but I s'pose George bin her man's name—hern beginned with a V; V something Rex bin her name; for see yer," and Katy showed a very fine cambric handkerchief, with the letters V. R. forming a pretty cipher in the corner. To such conclusive reasoning the clergyman could oppose nothing, and the stranger's grave was marked with the kingly name and title, Mrs. George Rex. Something he ventured to ask respecting the circumstances of the wreck, and the finding of the court of inquest, which, in his simplicity, he supposed, of course, to have rendered its verdict in the case of the body just interred; but, being a peaceable and somewhat timid man, he was soon silenced by the lowering looks bent upon him, and the fierce tones in which he was told, "There 's the ship, an' them that wants it can come an' take it! As to the courts, let them come *inquesting* among us, if them dares!"

"Human responsibility is limited by human ability,"

said the good but not brave man to himself. "It is clear I can do nothing here; ergo, I have no responsibility in the case." And, conscience silenced, not for the first time in the world's history, by a syllogism, or more correctly a sophism, the clergyman hastened to the lagoon where lay the boat in which the wreckers had brought him over, and was not sorry when he lost sight of his rough, and, as he began to think, dangerous audience. If he ventured to speak of the circumstances of his visit at Squan, they presented too common an aspect of life at the beach to excite surprise or occasion inquiry. The papers of the day contained some notice of bodies and a boat washed on shore by the storm; but the coast-police was, as we have said, extremely defective, and none to whom it did not pertain as his own especial business was willing to embroil himself with the wreckers, by too close inquiry into their proceedings. And so the ship, driven by successive storms higher and yet higher, rested at length on the beach itself, and, imbedded in its sands, became the dwelling of Dick Van Dyke; — and the child, all unconscious of the change by which its young life had been torn from its natural connection, and grafted on a strange wild stock, under the guardianship of "Him who made and loveth all," grew from infancy to childhood, as healthily, and perhaps as happily, in this strange home on the barren beach, as she would have done in the abodes of wealth and fashion.

CHAPTER II.

"I cannot but remember such things were,
That were most precious to me."

"All impediments in Fancy's course
Are motives of more Fancy."

SHAKSPEARE.

From the lonely beach to the thronged city; from the wrecker's cabin to the home of opulence, of gentle domestic affections, and generous hospitality.

Dr. Jamieson sits at his own tea-table, though it is still early evening. His good-humored wife, and his children, — two boys and a girl, all under twelve, — seem to regard the meal as a festival; their faces are bright with smiles. But there are two at that board who have nothing festive in countenance or manner. One of these is a boy about eight years old, pale-faced, and with an air of languor and shyness; the other, a gentleman whose age it would be somewhat difficult to determine, for whilst the snows of many winters seem to have fallen among his dark curls, and the lines on his face are such as time ordinarily takes long to grave, his form is as upright, his step as elastic, and his eye as quick, as those of youth; and when he smiles — it is not often — he shows a set of teeth both sound and white.

"We are doubly gainers by your visit, Captain Ross," says the mistress of the house, as they take their seats at the tea-table, spread with exquisite neatness and luxurious plenty. "I assure you the doctor has not taken tea with us since you were here last."

"I am very much obliged to him for giving me the

pleasure of his company," answers Capt. Ross, with his rare smile; "but what will the patients who are expecting you say, Doctor?"

"What they will say I don't know; but what I will say is quite ready: 'Patient from a great distance to consult me — was obliged to spend the evening with him to study his case.'" He laid his hand, as he spoke, on the small, graceful head of the pale-faced boy, and added, "What do you think of that, little Reverend?" Then, as he caught the wondering but still grave expression of the up-turned face, he concluded, "Ross, you'll have to make a parson of him, if you keep him in that home of yours much longer."

Later in the evening, when the gentlemen had withdrawn to the doctor's study, which was also his smoking-room, and were enjoying their fragrant Habanas, the subject was resumed, and Dr. Jamieson, with more seriousness, pressed on Capt. Ross the importance of a change in the habits of his little boy.

"He wants the companionship of children. He is growing old while he is still a baby. It will never do, Ross; if it should continue, either his brain, too severely taxed by the effort to come up to your level, will become diseased, and he will die young,"—here Capt. Ross threw down his cigar, and, rising hastily, walked, with some impatience in his manner, to the window, — "or," continued the doctor, "he will grow up with a constitution which will make him an incessant valetudinarian."

"And what can I do, Jamieson?" cried Capt. Ross.

"What can you do? Why, you can leave the wild country in which you have chosen to bury yourself, and come and live among civilized people," said Dr. Jamieson, bluntly.

His words evidently galled his friend, who answered, with some stiffness, "You will pardon me if I say that, as you do not know the object that led me there, you can be no fair judge of the necessity of my remaining."

"Well, and have you no children around you? Have your mechanics, your farmers, your cow-herds, no children? That boy of yours has never played with a child. I can see that in his face. I doubt if he has ever seen one, except, perhaps, *himself* in a looking-glass."

"You would not, surely, have me make my son the companion of such children as you have named!"

Dr. Jamieson took his cigar from his mouth, and fixed his eyes upon his friend, with a smile, under which the quick blood of Capt. Ross rose to his brow, and his quick temper, perhaps, fired a little; though, if it did, it was only for a moment, and then he laughed, as he said, "Well, Jamieson, speak out; to which of my follies are you going to apply the knife now?"

"Apply the knife! Excuse me; I would not, for the world, play the surgeon to folly. Why, sir, the follies and inconsistencies of men are the only amusements we dull working men have; they are our theatres and operas, our —"

"Well, well, Doctor; pray tell me in what way I have contributed to your entertainment now."

"Only by the beautiful consistency with which you, who think yourself so thoroughly democratic, and who inveigh so fiercely against the assumptions of a self-styled aristocracy, now repel the thought of your son playing with the children of working people."

"I never expressed any sympathy with coarseness and vulgarity, Doctor."

"O! that is it! And so your working people all had coarse and vulgar children! That was unfortunate. Now, for my part, I have seen as much refinement — true refinement, sir, not the mock article, made up of paint, and patches, and grimaces, and going no deeper than the clothes, but that which goes as deep as the heart of the man — I have seen as much of that in the hovels of the poor as in the assemblies of your fine ladies and gentlemen."

"Doubtless, Doctor; I have met such instances, myself. But a child does not discriminate character; it does not look below the surface; if it does not meet the habits of refined life in its associates, it must become vulgar."

"No, sir," answered the doctor, warmly. "There is no such *must.* I have seen a child,—but what is the use of talking about it? You are a born aristocrat, and all your democracy was only a fit of the spleen; but the important question now is, what is to be done for your boy, to get a little more strength into his frame, and color into his cheeks. Suppose you take him to the sea-shore. There are Newport and Rockaway—"

"Pray, pray, Doctor!" Capt. Ross exclaimed, eagerly; then, in a calmer tone, added, "if it be necessary for my poor boy, I will go; but, if I could be saved from the life of a fashionable watering-place—"

"Why, what has got into the man?" cried the doctor, with a bluntness to which Capt. Ross was accustomed in him, though his sensitive feelings and quick temper would scarcely have endured it from another. "You say you want refinement, and I would send you where you may meet the super-refined—the very topmost layer of society—its *cream* or its *scum*, as you please!"

"As much, at least, of the last as of the first, I suspect."

"Well, if you will not have Newport and Rockaway, what do you say to Squan Beach?"

"To what?"

"Squan Beach."

"Not a very taking name."

"A very good place, notwithstanding, with the best bass-fishing and duck-shooting I know of."

"Those are recommendations. And what else has it?"

"Excellent sea-bathing."

"And what accommodations?"

"A state-room for yourself, and another for your boy, if you like, in a ship that has been driven up on the beach,

high and dry; a capital cup of coffee and brown bread for your breakfast; and for your dinner the fish you catch or the birds you kill, done to a turn, by the best cook I know. I taught her myself; for Squan Beach has been a resort of mine for the last five years."

"Your description is tempting. Shall I be likely to find many others there?"

"No: you will probably have it all to yourself for the next two months. In the autumn a few veteran sportsmen may be there after ducks. Now, what do you say — will you go?"

"If you think the bathing will be of use to Edward — yes."

"Of the greatest use; it will make a man of him; or, at least, a boy instead of a baby."

"Then it is settled — I shall go."

"Well, stay with me to-morrow; you will want bathing-dresses and such traps, and that will give you time to get them; and the next day I will go down with you. I think I may give myself two days of freedom."

"How do we go?"

"To Shrewsbury in a steamboat; there we can get some kind of carriage to take us the rest of the way."

The doctor gave Mrs. Jamieson a secret commission, the next morning, the result of which was exhibited in the evening in the shape of a bathing-dress of bright red flannel, faced with blue. It was for a little girl, the doctor said, a particular friend of his, at the beach. Its exhibition led to some observations from the lady on the character of her husband's associates at Squan, which were not very flattering to Dick Van Dyke and his confrères, and which ended with "I cannot understand how you gentlemen can find any pleasure in companionship with such men!"

To this, Capt. Ross was silent, for, to tell the truth, this revelation of the character and occupation of his anticipated hosts was unexpected and startling, and he looked wit'

some anxiety for his friend's reply. Dr. Jamieson did not attempt to defend the dwellers on the beach from his wife's attack, but contented himself with assuring her that he had never been associated with them in wrecking, but only in fishing and shooting.

"But are they wreckers?" asked Capt. Ross.

"They are so reputed — I have never asked them the question," replied the doctor, gravely.

"But, Doctor, how can you speak so quietly about wreckers, and even advise Capt. Ross to go among them? Why, they are no better than murderers!" remonstrated Mrs. Jamieson, with some warmth.

"My dear Mrs. Jamieson," said the imperturbable doctor, "there are 'land-rats and water-rats,' — at least, so says one Will Shakspeare, and I know no better authority on such a question. Now, these are water-rats, perfectly safe for all land travellers; and we do not intend to go by sea."

The next day's sun was sinking behind the green woods of Ocean county as Capt. Ross and Dr. Jamieson drove in a little country wagon to the strange dwelling of Dick Van Dyke. Dick was seated on the cross-trees, and had long been scanning them with his glass; but he did not stir from his seat till Dr. Jamieson called out, "Dick Van Dyke! do you mean me to break a blood-vessel calling to you up there? I should like to know what Katy would do then for ointments for her rheumatiz?"

This last was said as Dick, having descended the ladders that led from the cross-trees to the deck, and from the deck to the beach on the landward side, approached the carriage with great deliberation, and stood beside the doctor, to inquire his will, replying only by a grim smile to the pleasantry addressed to him.

"Take the trunks in, Dick," said the doctor. "This gentleman and his son have come to spend some time with you."

"Better talk to my 'oman 'bout that," answered Dick,

concisely; and, stepping to the stern of the ship, he called Katy through one of the little windows. She soon made her appearance — a bronzed face, with a certain honesty and kindliness in its expression, which pleased, in spite of something of hardness by which they were accompanied; a form tall and square, dressed in a sort of linsey-woolsey that seemed of domestic manufacture, being woven in irregular stripes of blue and yellow. Over this was a clean white apron, which had evidently been just put on; for Katy was tying it as she approached the carriage. With her the arrangements which the doctor desired for his friend were soon made.

"And you 'll be stayin' yerself, sir?" said Katy, inquiringly.

"Only till noon to-morrow, Katy. And, now, where 's the little girl?"

"Yonder, sir, where Dick ought n't to ha' left her by herself." She glanced upward, as she spoke; and Capt. Ross, following with his eye the direction taken by hers, saw a diminutive figure seated on the cross-trees. Dick whistled, and in an instant it began to descend the ladder with cat-like agility, and, disappearing below the deck, soon stood on the sands, beside the strangers.

"Well, Harlequin!" cried the doctor, "how are you? Give us your hand."

The little hand was placed in his, and a pair of large brown eyes lifted confidingly to his face.

"Look! I have brought a little boy to see you. How do you like him?"

"I 'ike him — what 's 'ou name, 'ittle boy?"

Edward, instead of meeting this advance to acquaintanceship cordially, drew to the other side of his father, with a mixture of shyness and pride which was evident enough in his face.

"Aristocrat in the bud!" muttered the friendly doctor. Capt. Ross heard him, and turned towards the little girl to

whom Edward had given so unkind a reception, with the design of offering some attention that should soothe the wound inflicted by his son's rudeness. Not very much accustomed to converse with children, the only introduction to conversation that occurred to him was, "What is your name, my dear?"

"I name Mamy Van Dyke," was the reply, made with a very encouraging smile.

Was it the voice, or was it something in the soft, childish eyes that met his so smilingly, which caused the blood at one moment to crimson the brow of Capt. Ross, and at the next to retreat to his heart, leaving his face of a deadly paleness?

"You are not well, Ross," said Dr. Jamieson.

"Yes, perfectly well. Is she your child, madam?" The question was asked of Katy Van Dyke.

"Yes, she's ourn."

"Speak to her, my son," urged Capt. Ross; but Edward only peeped shyly at her from behind his father.

"He not 'ove Mamy," said the little girl, in her sweet, childish treble, while her eyes, full of a gentle sorrow, were again lifted to those of Capt. Ross. They recalled to his memory eyes as gentle, as sorrowful, and well-nigh as child-like in expression; and, with irrepressible emotion, he bent down and pressed his lips to those of the child, saying, "I love Mary."

It was a pledge of affection which she well understood, and in which she completely confided. In an instant her little hand glided into his.

"Mamy show 'ou bird-nest — Mamy give 'ou pretty egg."

"And will you give me some, too?" asked Dr. Jamieson, trifling, as wise men often like to do with a pretty child.

"Mamy on'y have one."

"Well, I'm your oldest friend — give it to me."

She hesitated a moment, looking at each of the gentlemen in turn, as if determining their respective claims on her gen-

erosity; then, shaking her head at the doctor, said, "Mamy 'ove new man best."

"Just like the rest of her sex!" exclaimed Dr. Jamieson. "But see here, Mary!" And he drew from his carpet-bag the showy bathing-dress which Mrs. Jamieson had procured for him, and, holding it up, asked, "Is not that pretty?"

"O! pretty, pretty frock!" she cried, gazing on it with delighted admiration.

"If I give it to you, will you love me better than the new man?"

It was strange to watch the earnest expression that came over the pretty child's face, as she seemed again to be weighing the comparative merits of the rival candidates for her favor, who stood quietly awaiting her award. Capt. Ross would not try to bribe her decision; yet he was surprised to feel how greatly he was gratified, when, again putting the hand in his that had been withdrawn in her delight at the beautiful dress, she repeated, "Mamy 'ove new man."

"Well, that is what I call love at first sight! But I'll be magnanimous. There, take your fine dress."

"'Ou give Mamy?"

"Yes; but Mary don't love me."

"Yes, Mamy 'ove 'ou! Mamy do!"

"What! better than you love him?"

"Mamy 'ove 'ou schooner-full; but Mamy 'ove new man ship-full."

A new mode of measuring love, significant of the objects with which this foundling of the sea had been most familiar.

The next day, Dr. Jamieson proposed taking a sea-bath before leaving the beach; and, the gentlemen and the two children being arrayed in their bathing-dresses, the gay-looking group proceeded to the water's edge; but there Edward halted, and no persuasions could induce him to go further.

"Will you go with me, Mary?" asked Capt. Ross; and, without hesitation, the little hand was linked in his, and the

white feet stepped down into the surf. This was not a new thing to Mary. Often had Dick Van Dyke carried her out into the surf with him. Sometimes he held her hand, and let her walk beside him, till some great wave would lift her off her feet, and her tiny form would float on its top like some sea-bird, screaming, not with terror, but with exultation.

Edward soon learned to look with admiring wonder upon the little girl whom he had at first so greatly contemned. The sea-gulls, with their flapping wings, — the ducks in the lagoon, with their strong bills, their noisy quacking, and their fiercely-rapid movements, — all these were objects of terror to him; but this child sported with them as with her mates, fear seeming to her an unknown thing. Amid these wild scenes and fierce sounds, her life had passed as tranquilly as a summer's dream. Nature had shown to her a gentle heart under a stern face; and why should she fear? Capt. Ross, too, was stern in looks; a storm-cloud seemed often brooding on his brow, and lightnings flashed not unfrequently from the dark eyes beneath. He was silent, too, and, some would have said, morose. Passionately attached to his son, — an attachment evidenced by that readiness to sacrifice all personal feelings to his advantage which had brought him to Squan Beach this summer, — he yet was not what would have been called a tender father. Caressing word or touch was rare with him. Such a man is not apt to be a favorite with children. Even his own son approached him with little of the familiarity of a child; but with Mary he was a favorite. He could not be sterner than the sea, more silent than the lonely beach; and he was more gentle in expression than the human beings with whom her life had hitherto been passed.

Idleness is not an enviable condition to any man — least of all, to an unhappy man. Capt. Ross generally contrived to keep himself busy when at home; but here the busy idleness of fishing was all the employment he could find,

and of this he soon wearied. It left his mind too much at liberty to pursue its own wayward, and, alas ! painful flights. Finding that his state-room made a somewhat confined sitting-room, and that the outer cabin was generally occupied by Katy Van Dyke with her noisy avocations of cooking and washing, he erected a sort of tent for himself just above high-water mark.

The arrangement of this tent was a subject of both thought and action for several days; the pole and pins requiring a visit to Squam, and the cover being made by Katy's unskilful hands, under his direction, from a coarse green cloth reserved by Dick Van Dyke from the last wrecked cargo for his own use, but readily sold by him to Capt. Ross for a sum which he knew was treble what he could have obtained for it in New York. Finished, he found it, in fine weather, as comfortable as it was picturesque. A rough box, covered with one of the small mattresses made for a ship's berths, of which Katy had many, served him for a seat or a couch, according to his pleasure; and, with a table for his books and papers, he needed no other furniture. Here, free from the gaze of prying eyes, he often sat for hours, a book in his hand, and his eyes far off upon the sea or the distant horizon, peopling air and ocean with forms and faces that belonged to a happier past. And with this past, Mary Van Dyke, the child of the wrecker, soon became strangely and fantastically linked. Liking the stranger, as we have said she did, Mary loved to steal within his tent, and prattle to him, if he were in talking mood; or sit quietly and see him write or read, — mysterious operations both to her, — if he were not. Even when at play with Edward, she preferred, somewhat to his surprise, to be near the tent, where, the cover being looped back to admit the breeze, she could see her friend, and sometimes exchange a word or a smile with him. Capt. Ross, with all his self-absorption, found it impossible to resist her winning ways; yet he was not won by words and looks alone. There was a tone, sometimes, in

the voice in which her simple words were uttered, that seemed an echo of that past he so loved to recall. There was a look in her soft brown eyes, when raised to his, which he had long supposed could only be found in heaven. Something, too, in Mary's movements, as she danced along the sands, — something in her waving curls, which, as the wind blew them hither and thither, seemed to catch the sunbeams and hold them imprisoned in their golden meshes, brought back on his heart a flood of softening memories, — memories the saddest of all others, the memories of lost happiness. More than once, overpowered by such emotions, he caught the child, with a quick, passionate clasp, to his bosom; then, as she, unconscious of the deeper feeling that prompted the embrace, would clasp her arms around his neck, and press her lips to his cheek, he would put her as quickly down, and move away from her, ashamed of his own want of self-command.

A few weeks at the sea-side did wonders for Edward; he gained color and strength, and Capt. Ross began to talk of returning home; but Dr. Jamieson, on being consulted, strenuously advised his remaining where he was till August, and, at least, the first week of September, were past. "It is by such impatience," wrote the doctor, that, in nine cases out of ten, a patient who has been sent from home by his physician, forfeits all the advantages derived from the change; and then the silly people, who think they know everything, say, 'How mistaken Dr. —— was! Mr. so-and-so might have done well enough, if he had not been sent away.' Learn to be satisfied when you are doing well, my dear Ross, — a difficult lesson, I know, with your restless temperament."

"This place may be very good for Edward, but it is bad, very bad, for me," soliloquized Capt. Ross, after reading this letter. "I have too much time for thought. I must find something to do, and persuade my old friend Merton to come here; this is the season for his holiday, and he loves fishing."

The result of these thoughts was, that Edward was told the next day to bring his books to the tent.

"I will not keep you more than two hours each day — just enough time to prevent your losing everything you have learned."

This proposal was not very satisfactory to Edward, but, strange to tell, it pleased little Mary right well. She was a quiet child, much given to a sort of musing thoughtfulness; and she now sat, through those two hours, under the tent with Capt. Ross and Edward, listening to sounds which conveyed little or no meaning to her mind, just as she had been accustomed to sit beside Katy or Dick Van Dyke, amused with her own speculations respecting their labors. At least half the restlessness of children under happier circumstances is, doubtless, the effect of the incessant efforts to amuse them — efforts to which our little Mary was a stranger. Yet her quietness excited the surprise of Capt. Ross, who one day asked her if she would have a book to look at while Edward was studying his lessons.

"Mamy don' know book," was the answer, in a somewhat sad voice.

"Would you like to learn? shall I teach you?" asked the captain; and, in a moment, the eager child was on her feet at his side, and ready for her first lesson.

For the next ten days Mary carried a little stick about with her, and she might be tracked over the beach by the letters of the alphabet traced on the sands. Her progress was rapid, and in little more than a fortnight Katy and Dick Van Dyke were invited into the tent to hear her read. Dick would not come. He had not been at all pleased with her attachment to the stranger, and he now declared, gruffly, to Mary, who had brought the invitation from Capt. Ross, that he did not care for her or her books.

"The more shame for you!" cried Katy, angrily, as, taking Mary's hand, she led her back to Capt. Ross.

There was a woman's kindliness, and a mother's tender-

ness, to the child who had been her nursling, in Katy Van Dyke's heart; and she now listened to Mary's reading with perhaps even more pride than was felt by Mary herself.

"An't she smart?" she exclaimed to Capt. Ross, as the reading concluded. "Would n't she make a grand lady, if she only had the chance to larn?"

"If you would let me have her to educate," cried the captain, eagerly, "she should have every opportunity of learning that I could obtain for her."

"An' what would Dick an' me be a doin' while she was a larnin'?" cried Katy, sharply.

Another fortnight passed away. It was now the first week in September. The weather was bright and warm, and the tent was still the favorite resort of Capt. Ross. Here he sat, one day, bending over Mary as she stood reading beside him, while Edward, seated at the little table, with an atlas before him, was working out the knotty problem of the difference between the latitude and longitude of his present residence and of his home in the western part of New York, when, a shadow falling within the tent, Capt. Ross looked hastily up, to see, standing within its entrance, one whom he sprang to meet with an outstretched hand, and a face of cordial welcome.

The visitor's white hairs betokened him to be many years older than Capt. Ross; yet the lines of his face were less deeply marked. A kindly, benevolent, hopeful spirit looked forth from his eyes, and gave to his countenance somewhat of perennial youthfulness. There was a little amused surprise in his eye, when first Capt. Ross met its glance; but its expression softened into that of pleased affection, as he met his friend's grasp with one as hearty, and stooped to greet first Edward, and then Mary, with a kiss.

"Do not let me interrupt the lessons," he said, as he seated himself beside Edward. "I can entertain myself sufficiently with this glorious view."

"O! the lessons are of no consequence. Go to play, children. I must speak to Mr. Merton."

While Edward and Mary put away their books, as they had been taught to do, Capt. Ross hurried them, evidently impatient to be alone with his friend; yet when they were gone he seemed in no haste to speak, throwing himself upon the couch beside Mr. Merton, and looking out with dreamy eyes upon the sea. It was Mr. Merton who first broke the silence.

"I admire your taste," he said, "in having pitched your tent here. I should think that view would bow the most stubborn spirit in reverent prayer. Have you found it so, my friend?"

There was a brother's tenderness and a pastor's more solemn interest in the question. Capt. Ross did not answer immediately. When he did, it was with an abrupt, "No! my thoughts have not been led upward, like yours. Prayer was not always an unaccustomed thing to me; but since my life has been made desolate, for what should I pray?"

"For your son," said Mr. Merton, "if not for yourself."

"We are told the prayers of the wicked are an abomination!—he will do better without mine!" was the bitter response.

"That may be, if your prayers are wicked—made for wicked ends; but ——"

"I cannot listen to you now on this subject!" Capt. Ross broke in, impatiently. "I sent for you to speak of myself—to tell you whither those waves have led me. In this solitude, with those wild waves moaning forever in my ears, I have thought till thought was well-nigh madness. Still, I could have borne it, as I have borne all the bitter past, in silence; but I want your aid, and, to obtain it, I must speak of one whom I never thought to name again."

There was a moment's silence. Mr. Merton knew not what to say, and Capt. Ross seemed gathering up his ener-

gies for a painful effort. He rose from the couch, walked to the entrance of the tent, and stood long with his back to Mr. Merton, looking out upon the wide waste of waters. Suddenly the silence was broken by a child's musical laugh, and, as if recalled by it to the present, Capt. Ross turned, resumed his seat beside Mr. Merton, and asked, "Did you observe the little girl who stood beside me as you entered?"

"I did; she is a singularly beautiful child."

"She is the breathing image of—of—my wife! My Violet lives again in her, in look, tone, and movement. The child loves me, too, as none have loved me since she was gone."

Capt. Ross paused, but, as Mr. Merton was about to speak, stopped him to ask, "Do you believe that those who have passed into another state of being can hold intercourse with us here?"

"Well, that is a question," began Mr. Merton, slowly and warily,—too slowly for his excited friend, who interrupted him to say, "Of course, I do not mean any personal appearance, any outward sign or sound of their presence; but, may we not, in the stillness of our souls, feel, and feel truly, that they are influencing us?"

"I think it very probable," said Mr. Merton.

"And I know it,—I feel it to be certain. Since I have been here, I have known that—that my wife ——" he could not utter the word without evident difficulty, and paused for a moment to recover himself; then, as if disdaining the weakness, and determined to conquer it, he repeated, in a firmer voice, "*my wife* has been near me."

Accustomed, in his sacred vocation as a pastor, to deal with the human mind in every phase of suffering, Mr. Merton saw that this was one of those cases in which confidence should be encouraged. During the four or five years in which he had known Capt. Ross, while admiring him as a gentleman and a scholar, he had considered him

as the most self-reliant and self-sustained of mortals. Having, early in his life, accepted the charge of a congregation in the interior of New York, in what was then the *ultima Thule* of civilization, he had found a singular charm in the society of Captain Ross, restoring to him, as it did, the intellectual companionship from which he had long been estranged. But, had there been any spark of vanity or self-conceit about the good pastor, it must have been sadly wounded by the conviction that, in this intercourse, he received far more enjoyment than he gave. Yet it would have been difficult for a more captious man than Mr. Merton to quarrel with the captain; for his manner, if not warm, was always courteous, almost deferential; and not the church only in which Mr. Merton ministered, but the parsonage also in which he dwelt, gave substantial tokens of his friend's generous kindness. And now, for the first time in their intercourse, Mr. Merton felt himself of importance to Capt. Ross; felt that his self-reliance had given way,—that even this strong man had at last found the need of friendly sympathy. To hear the calm, steady voice, checked and shaken by emotion,—the cold, measured words exchanged for those which impassioned feeling only prompts; to see the features, usually stern and rigid as if cast in iron, become mobile as a woman's,—seemed strange indeed. It was as if the thick-ribbed ice of the frozen North should be rent asunder, and disclose a sea of fire beneath it.

"Better give the fire vent," said Mr. Merton to himself; and, breaking, not without a painful effort, through that delicate reserve with which he had hitherto guarded himself most carefully from any question, or even allusion, that might seem to intrude on his friend's confidence, he said, gently, like one who felt that he might be touching a painful wound, "I have often wished to know something of your past life,—I never wished it so much as now,—that I might better understand and sympathize with you."

"I have been trying, for the last four years, to forget it;

but, since I came here, I have lived it over and over again. Minute trifles, from which long years of time and thousands of miles separate me, have come back upon me as if they were actual existences now and here. I can close my eyes, and see the waving of the gray moss upon the old oaks around my childhood's home, and hear the dash of the waves upon its pebbly beach. This home was on an island in the sea, some miles from the shore, in the south-eastern extremity of the State of Georgia. It was a lovely spot. Grassy savannas, covered, in summer, with innumerable flowers of every hue, their wide expanse broken here and there by clumps of live-oak, gave pasturage to large herds of cattle, and to many deer, which, for more than a mile around my mother's house, where neither gun nor dog was suffered to molest them, roamed as fearlessly as I have since seen them do in an English park. I said my mother's house; for my father died before I could name him. My poor mother never left the island after his death. She gave her life to me in passionate devotion; and I loved her very tenderly; yet I often grieved her. She had not ruled me in my boyhood, and the impetuous impulses of youth were too strong to be curbed by her gentle hand. I grew weary of my home — of its quiet and somewhat sombre character. I longed for adventure, — for what I called LIFE, — and I early announced, to my poor mother's dismay, my determination to enter the army. Her unwillingness induced me to delay what I never relinquished; and I was just twenty when I joined the small detachment of troops that garrisoned Fort Detroit, as Ensign Ross. Six years after, I was recalled home by my mother's illness. I thank God for those last few weeks spent with her! She died, her glazing eyes fixed on me, and her feeble voice blessing me even to the last.

"I was now alone in the world," Capt. Ross resumed, after a moment's pause, "and life looked very dreary to me. My home, always sombre, was now oppressively gloomy. My military experience had disappointed me. The life of a

garrison, in time of peace, is dull enough; or, if it be enlivened, it is by pleasures that were not to my taste. I should probably have resigned about this time, but that a slight cloud, the shadow of the storm then raging in Europe, rested upon our relations with England, and war seemed not impossible. In the mean time, my health gave way, and I was advised to travel. A sea voyage, it was thought, would be particularly useful to me. Something more of life stirred in my veins, and throbbed in my heart, at the very thought. The sea had more excitements than usually belong to it just then. The fleets of England and France were not very scrupulous respecting neutral rights; privateers were numerous; every merchantman was armed; and many a thrilling tale was told of hazards encountered, and gallant defences made, by peaceful traders. For some time I was delayed by the embargo which closed our own ports; but, in 1809, the act which established this was repealed, and I was among the first to avail myself of the freedom thus restored. Before sailing, I had been assured by men of high standing that there was little danger of more than a paper war with England, or, at most, an occasional shot exchanged at sea, when our vessels refused the search which theirs claimed the right to make. My friends obtained for me a leave of absence, which permitted me to remain abroad while my health required it; and the very direction which I myself desired to take was authorized by the advice given me by the chief of the war department, to take every opportunity afforded me for observing the latest improvements in the art of war. This could be best done in Spain and Portugal; and thither I accordingly made my way, through many difficulties ——"

"And perils, I should think!" ejaculated Mr. Merton.

"And perils," quietly repeated Capt. Ross. "I should, after all, have had little opportunity for observation, however, had I not made some acquaintances among the British officers. For these I was indebted to letters of introduction

given me by officers in Canada, with whom I had established very friendly relations when serving in Detroit. Among those to whom I was thus introduced was Colonel Arden. He received me kindly; and, through his friendly indulgence, I was able to accompany the English army for several weeks in its marches and counter-marches. He reaped his reward. Mortally wounded at Talavera, he died in my arms. I was the only idler in that crowd of men, and to me he intrusted his tender messages and last commands for his orphan, — his 'little Violet,' as he fondly called her, — to whom I promised myself to convey the intelligence of his death. Accordingly, I proceeded as quickly as possible to England, bearing with me, as my credentials, a few lines traced by the feeble hand of the dying man to his child. I had also a letter of introduction to Lady Caroline Devereux, a distant relative, who had consented to receive the youthful Violet into her house during Colonel Arden's absence. For four years the business of my life has been to forget all that I am now telling you; and yet that scene rises as vividly before me as if it had passed but yesterday. Again I stand in the presence of Lady Caroline Devereux, a haughty woman, who never forgot that she was the daughter of an earl, and the wife of one of England's wealthiest commoners, — one, too, whose family name was older even than her own. Dark and proud, yet condescendingly courteous, she received me, and heard my sad tale.

"'As a friend and connection of Colonel Arden, permit me to thank you for your kindness to him. I hope you will remain at Oakdale Priory a few days, and give me the pleasure of introducing you to the friends who are with us.'

"Not a word of the daughter, — the 'poor little Violet,' — who had brought me there! Declining the invitation to remain, I asked when I might be permitted to call on Miss Arden, as I had promised her father to communicate his last words to her myself.

"'Shall I send for her?' asked Lady Caroline. 'She is

somewhere in the grounds with Devereux; they are inseparable companions.'

"'Will not your ladyship first communicate to her this painful intelligence?' I asked. 'She ought not to hear it first from a stranger.'

"'O! I cannot,' she exclaimed, evidently shrinking in dismay from the thought; 'she is so passionately attached to her father! Suppose Devereux should tell her? Ah! that will do. I will send for him. May I ask you to remain till she has heard it. You may then be able to make the communication you wish to do.'

"I bowed my assent, and was left alone for perhaps half an hour. Then her ladyship returned to say that Devereux had undertaken the painful task. Who Devereux was, I could not decide. I should have thought him the husband of Lady Caroline, but that I had heard she was a widow. If he were her son, he must surely be engaged to Miss Arden; otherwise her ladyship would not have spoken so freely of their intimacy.

"I was interrupted in such thoughts as these by a loud cry from an adjoining room. I started from my seat, and looked at Lady Caroline, expecting her to do the same; but she only turned pale, and, throwing herself back upon her couch, covered her eyes with her hands, exclaiming, eagerly, 'Pray go to poor Devereux! It was he who cried out. I cannot bear to see her!' Her ladyship, it was evident, felt very strongly *for herself*.

"I passed into the room from which the cry had proceeded, and found ——" The memory of the scene seemed for a moment to overpower Capt. Ross. He ceased to speak, and covered his eyes with his hands. When he spoke again, it was in a voice low and husky. "My Violet was then in the first flush of womanhood, — scarcely seventeen. She lay back in the great arm-chair, in which she had been seated, pale and rigid, while young Devereux, a boy of not more than ten years of age, knelt beside her, rubbing her

cold hands, and beseeching her to speak to him. Even at that moment, I was indignant at Lady Caroline for having trusted a mere child with so delicate a commission. To do the boy justice, he seemed to love his cousin, as he called her. To his imploring question of what he should do, I answered by lifting the fainting girl in my arms, laying her on a couch, and asking him, in a tone probably not free from irritation, if there was no woman whose services could be procured for her. He rushed from me, and quickly returned with the housekeeper, a respectable matron, who, while she attended to Violet with affectionate assiduity, suggested that we had better leave her before she should be quite conscious. 'Poor thing! it would bring it all back on her too sudden-like, if she saw you.' We withdrew, young Devereux, a manly boy, leading the way back to the room I had just left. I was ill at ease; unwilling to remain long where I was, yet equally unwilling to leave my friend's daughter till I had complied with his last request, or to force upon her scarce conscious ear such sad words with indecent hurry.

"'Has Miss Arden no friend near her of less overpowering sensibilities than Lady Caroline, to whom I could intrust the delivering of a note from her dying father to Miss Arden?'

"'If you would let me drive you to the Rectory,' he began, with some hesitation, and with a flush that I fear marked his consciousness of the sneer in my allusion to his lady mother's fine feelings. He seemed, young as he was, to exercise everywhere at Oakdale Priory the authority of a master. At his command a carriage was quickly brought to the door, and a drive of scarcely a mile, through the Priory park, brought us to the dwelling of the worthy rector and his wife, who proved themselves as true friends as ever orphan daughter had. Their reception of my sad intelligence made us friends at once. I accepted from them the invitation I had already declined from Lady Caroline,

to remain till Miss Arden was sufficiently composed to converse with me. In a very few days Violet, too, became an inmate of the Rectory, at the urgent invitation of its kind tenants, and with the ready consent of Lady Caroline, who doubtless found the presence of one in sorrow weigh heavily on her sensitive heart. From the first hour I saw Violet, I felt for her an interest inexpressibly tender, and this soon grew into love the most devoted. She was worthy of it all. Exquisitely lovely in person, her beauty was yet her least charm. She had few relations, perhaps fewer friends; for Col. Arden had no fortune, — nothing but his pay, and had lately been promoted to a colonelcy. All her love had been lavished on her father, and her father's friend could not be regarded with indifference. She never returned to Oakdale Priory. Its young master urged it, vehemently declaring it was and should ever be her home; but he went to Eton, Lady Caroline's languid invitations ceased, and it was at the home of the good rector and his wife that I wooed and won my bride."

Quietly as this was said, there was such inexpressible sadness in the voice, such ghastly pallor in the face of Capt. Ross, that Mr. Merton, laying his hand upon his arm, said, gently, "Interesting as this is to me, I fear it is trying you beyond what you can bear, to speak of it."

"No — no," he answered, quickly. "I have long wished to speak of it to some one. It is terrible to brood over such memories in secret. It will be a relief to think that some one knows the burden under which I walk; but I cannot dwell on what remains. In one year from the time of her father's death, Violet became my wife, and I learned for the first time to bless God for the gift of life. Even the memories of the past grew brighter in the gladness of the present. For the first time in my life, I thought of home with pleasure, and longed to show it to her who was to be its mistress. I would have returned to it at once, but the sea was still covered with privateers, and the danger,

which had been only a pleasant excitement when I was alone, I now shrank from like a timid girl. Time passes rapidly away on the wings of pleasure. I became a father, and my cup of joy seemed full to overflowing. I was startled from my dream of bliss by the intelligence that the United States had declared war against England. You may wonder that I had not foreseen the probability of this. The renewal of the embargo had indeed made me somewhat uneasy; but there was in England so settled a conviction of the impossibility of war, that one even less desirous of peace than I was, might have been persuaded to believe in its continuance. To embark from England for America after the declaration of war, was almost impossible. Every port was watched, every vessel searched. It was not till the autumn of 1813, that I was able, by a large bribe, to induce the owner of a small schooner, once engaged in smuggling French goods, but now sailing under a letter of marque, to stop at an obscure port on the western coast of Ireland, and take me off."

"But you ran great risks!" said Mr. Merton.

"I did — risks which I would not have encountered, had I not been half-maddened by the thought that I might seem, in my own country, a cowardly deserter."

"And your Violet?" questioned the kind pastor.

"Of course she could not accompany me. Indeed, her condition just then would have made a sea voyage, under the happiest circumstances, unadvisable. I left her to the care of our good friends at the Rectory. Ever since our marriage, we had resided in a pretty cottage, only about two miles from them. Now, Violet removed, with her child and nurse, under their roof, they having consented, at my earnest desire, to receive them as boarders."

"And Lady Caroline — did she show no kindness, in this time of sorrow, to her kinswoman?"

"Lady Caroline Devereux had long ceased to offer that

patronage which I would not accept, either for my wife or myself."

"And her son — had he forgotten his cousin?"

"Young Devereux was full of protestations of affection and offers of service to his cousin, whenever he saw her; but he was little at the Priory; and what could a boy of scarcely thirteen do?"

"He might have used his influence with his mother to —"

"That I forbade. I wanted no connection with her, or her haughty house. Perhaps this feeling made me unjust to the boy. Violet loved him, and I tried, for her sake, to receive him kindly; but I fear I was not very successful. I could not forget that he was the son of her who had treated my angel-wife with coldness and neglect, in the moment of her bitterest need."

Mr. Merton saw that this was no time for a homily on the sin of cherishing resentful feelings, and he wisely drew his friend's attention to another subject.

"And you reached America in safety?" he said.

"Yes. After many turnings and doublings to avoid the English, of whom I was afraid, and the Americans, of whom the skipper was himself afraid, I was put on board a Yankee coasting schooner, which had ventured a little beyond the usual limits, in Long Island Sound. I landed in Connecticut, made my way with all speed to Washington, told my story to the Secretary of War, and, with a lieutenant's commission, joined my regiment on the northern frontier. During the remainder of the war, I was never absent from my post. From Violet I heard more frequently than I could have dared to hope; yet I waited often for weary weeks, thirsting for a word from her. Then would come a large packet, full of all those little details which had made the sum of my bliss for three years. Late in the autumn of 1814, — several months after the event occurred, — I learned that she was again a mother — that a little girl, who, by my request, was to be called Violet, awaited a father's blessing.

'She has not been baptized,' wrote Violet, 'and will not be till you can stand with me at the font.' Alas! the waters of death closed over her ere her brow had been touched by those of baptism. At the battle of New Orleans I received a wound, which I regretted chiefly because it prevented my availing myself immediately of the peace already declared, and so soon after known in this country, to return to England, and bring my Violet home with me. While still unable to rise from my bed, I wrote to urge that she would not leave our kind friends until I could myself come for her. It was too late. When my letter arrived in England, she had already sailed. With her was my yet unseen daughter. They were attended by the infant's nurse, and by a faithful man-servant, who had lived with me before my marriage, and whom I had left with my wife. Edward was spared to me by a somewhat singular chance —"

"By a merciful Providence," said Mr. Merton, reverently.

"I scarcely felt it merciful, then," answered Capt. Ross. "He had just recovered from measles, and his medical attendant declared the winter voyage to be an extremely dangerous experiment for him, though perfectly safe for a healthy infant. This opinion had induced Violet to relinquish her plan of joining me; but, unfortunately, the first hurried accounts of the battle of New Orleans were received and published in England, with a list of the killed, wounded, and missing, in both armies — that of the Americans being extracted from a newspaper published at New Orleans a few days after the battle, and forwarded by an English prisoner to his friends at home. In an hour after this report was received, and two days before my letter arrived, my wife and child were on their way to Liverpool, Edward and his nurse having been left with our kind friends at the Rectory, Mr. and Mrs. Leigh. And this was all we ever knew —"

"All?" exclaimed Mr. Merton.

"All. Mr. Leigh wrote to me a few days after, to give

us information of Edward's health, as he had promised his mother to do. He congratulated us on the reünion which he supposed would have taken place when his letter arrived, and scolded my Violet playfully for having sailed without letting him know in what ship she had taken her passage. From the moment I read that letter, despair seized on me. I was still weak from the loss of blood; I had thought myself only the day before unequal to a longer ride than two miles; but all was forgotten now; to be still was the only thing which was impossible for me. In a few hours I had seen every shipping-merchant in New Orleans. I had made a list of every vessel that had arrived there from the first of February to that day, the 20th of March; I had seen the names of their passengers; I had examined and cross-examined the captains of every vessel from England that was in port. Then I went to Savannah, to Charleston, and on — on — till I had accomplished my sad task. Every sea-port in the United States had been visitéd — hope could not cheat me here. Then I sailed for Liverpool. O! the tortures of that voyage! when the speed of the hurricane would have seemed slow to me, and dead calms and baffling winds kept me for forty agonizing days on the silent waste of waters, which I questioned in vain of secrets, to fathom which I would willingly have sunk to its lowest depths. I felt often that I hovered on the verge of madness. I was tempted every hour for many days to plunge into the sea, and bury my misery a thousand fathoms deep; but I had yet a work to do; I must search, examine, question, at Liverpool, as I had done at other ports. It was done — all done — there was not the remotest clue that was not followed through its most labyrinthine windings to its termination. When I had done all I could, I found the most active members of the detective police; I told them all, clearly, and with a calmness that now seems wonderful to me. I even, at their request, described her, my lost treasure — told them her height,

the color of her eyes, of her hair. It was all in vain. They went from hotel to hotel, from stage-office to stage-office, but 'No intelligence' was still the answer to my inquiry. 'And now is there anything to be done?' I asked of them, with a strange quietude.

"'Are you sure that while you've been looking for her, the lady has not quietly gone back to the place she set out from?' they asked. 'One thing is certain,' said they, 'she did not come to Liverpool; some accident may have happened to detain her on the road. You say there was an infant with her; it may have been taken ill; it may have died, and, after many days' detention, after that letter was written and sent, she may have gone back to her friends.'

"Before they had finished speaking my heart was bounding with new life. I paid them well, and as soon as post-horses could be put to a carriage, I was on the road. I travelled night and day. I arrived at the Rectory, hope growing stronger with every mile, till at last I really expected to see my Violet stand before me when I entered the old-fashioned breakfast-room, where I knew the family were probably at that hour assembled. I paused at the door; she was not there. My friends sprang to meet me, but I scarcely heard their greeting. 'Where is Violet?' I asked, with failing heart.

"'Violet? Is she not with you? She left us, weeks ago, to sail from Liverpool for America.'

"Before the words were done I had fallen at their feet, unconscious, and weeks passed away before I awoke to a full perception of my misery. My recovery was gradual, and my health was still feeble when I left the scenes of my lost happiness, and, travelling by easy stages with Edward and his nurse for London, embarked thence for America. I dared not return to Liverpool; I must preserve my reason, for my poor boy's sake — my Violet's child; and the remembrance of all I had suffered, and, yet more, of all I

had hoped, in Liverpool, would, I feared, be more than I could bear. For the same reason, I would not return to my home in the South, where Violet had so desired to go, and where all our anticipations for the future centred. Neither could I part with the place thus associated with her. I placed my Southern property in the charge of a near relation of my mother's, who would, I was sure, be kind to my people, and purchased that near you, on which I have since resided."

"My poor friend! may our heavenly Father comfort you! He only can, under such trials," said Mr. Merton, with earnest feeling.

Capt. Ross sat seemingly lost in revery for some minutes; then exclaimed, abruptly, "And now—this wrecker's child—do you know there are moments when I am ready to claim her as my own?—ready to believe that those holy eyes, that golden hair, those graceful movements, can belong only to my Violet's child?"

"Have you asked these people about her?"

"Yes; and they say she is theirs. It is strange—this haunting presence. Do you know that this child diffuses around her, at times, the very perfume which Violet, from a fancy of mine rather than from her own liking, was accustomed to use? It was the odor of the flower whose name she bore. My friend, how can I part with this child? or how shall I induce these people to give her to me? It was to aid me in the accomplishment of this project that I sent for you. I would give half my income yearly—if I could do it without wronging Edward, I would give more—to secure her as my own."

"I fear," said Mr. Merton, "you can hardly hope to induce parents to give up their only child."

"I do not believe the man cares for her; he would sell her, I am convinced, to-morrow; but, the woman—"

"Has, doubtless, a mother's heart," interrupted Mr. Merton.

"Could you not persuade her to do what would be so greatly for her child's advantage?" asked Capt. Ross.

"Are you sure it would be for her advantage to take her from that position in which she has been placed by Providence?"

"Sure it would be for her advantage to be educated as my daughter, rather than as the daughter of this Dick Van Dyke!" cried Captain Ross, with almost indignant surprise.

"I grant that, to all human appearance, it would be immeasurably to her advantage," answered Mr. Merton; "but I cannot doubt that He who selected her lot knew what was best for her."

"Excuse me, Mr. Merton," said Capt. Ross, with something like contempt stealing over his face; "I fear I do not quite understand you. Is it your meaning that we should never attempt to improve our condition — that condition in which we were born — because God chose it for us? Do I state your theory correctly?"

"With the addition of three brief but very important words. I would say, we should never strive to improve our condition *by doing wrong*."

"And what wrong would this poor child be doing, in the case supposed?"

"The child would do none. As I understand the affair, she would not be an actor in it at all. The arrangement would be between you and those people."

"And if they were willing to give her up?"

"They could not destroy the bond between them, or abrogate that divine command, 'Honor thy father and thy mother.' Now, I believe that for no being is there any happiness except in obedience to God's commands and submission to his will; and the question in my mind is, will not the arrangement you propose render obedience to this command difficult, if not impossible, to the child?"

"And so you would have this creature, so richly endowed,

grow up in the coarse vulgarities, the brutal stupidity, of her present home, that she may not become so elevated as to hold herself superior to the savage wrecker and his ignorant wife, who, by some strange freak of nature or of fortune, call her theirs!"

Capt. Ross spoke with vehemence. Mr. Merton answered, with his usual serenity, "You are warmly interested in this question,—pardon me if I think too warmly to be an impartial judge. Do not think me unsympathizing that I differ from you, or that I make some objection to the mode in which you state your argument. You speak of this child as being richly endowed. Let me ask, by whom? You speak of her condition as the result of a strange freak of nature or of fortune. Now, to me, what you call nature and fortune are the forming hand and determining decree of Him from whom all her endowments came, and—"

"Grant it," interrupted Capt. Ross. "Does not my interest in her come from Him, too?"

"Assuredly. And if that interest be gratified within legitimate limits, it will be a source of blessing to you both."

"And what, may I ask, do you call legitimate limits?"

"All of advantage to her, all of kindness from you, which does not break the bonds of nature."

"Be a little more particular, if you please, in your instructions," said Capt. Ross, with a haughty humility. "I am slow of understanding."

Mr. Merton saw that he was more quick of temper than slow of understanding; but he answered, quietly, "I think you might provide for her education at a good country school, where her mind would be developed, and her moral and religious principles fixed, as far as human agency can fix them, without accustoming her to such refinements as would make her associations here an utter misery and disgust to her."

"And what good do you propose to me from this very feasible arrangement?"

"The blessing of him who gives, which, you know, we have high authority for saying is greater than that of him who receives."

"I thank you; but—"

"Gentlemen, won't you please come to dinner?" interrupted Katy Van Dyke.

Capt. Ross made a movement expressive of impatience at the interruption; but Mr. Merton arose, saying, pleasantly, "Come; we will talk about this another time. I have not thought sufficiently of it to feel much confidence in my own opinion."

That passion must be serious on which the act of dining does not exert some mollifying influence. Captain Ross had so far recovered his equanimity, when they rose from table, as to consent to join his friend in a fishing excursion. It was a calm, pleasant day. Dick Van Dyke accompanied them in the little shallop, and they returned about sunset, bringing back with them some fine sea-bass. Edward had gone with them, and Mary, weary of her solitary afternoon, stood on the shore, waiting to welcome them.

"Them purty fishes," she said to Mr. Merton, divining, with a child's quick instinct, his interest in them, as he stood watching their disembarkation. Mr. Merton loved children, and soon entered into talk with the little girl. He make her remark the shape of the eye of the fish; explained, in language adapted to her childish comprehension, their peculiar breathing apparatus; and, having caught her attention, asked, at length, if she knew who made them. As his eye dwelt on her earnest face, he saw a moment's puzzled look, followed by a bright expression, as if the difficulty were conquered; and Mary answered, confidently, "The sea make 'em."

"Then, what makes the sea?"

Again the perplexed expression, and again the sudden clearing away, and Mary replied, "The rain."

"And what makes the rain?"

"The sky. It turn black all over, and then it rain."

Mary spoke confidently, now, as if she had, at length, found sure ground, and was fully acquainted with her subject.

"And who made the sky?" asked the inexorable questioner. This was advancing one step beyond Mary's imagination. She had arrived at what seemed to her the end of all things. She could rise no higher than to that great blue vault. She bent back her head, and looked up at it with a new feeling of wonder at the thought that it had been made.

"Who," continued Mr. Merton, "made that great, bright sun to shine there all the day, and the moon and the twinkling stars to give us light by night?"

It was a great thought, too great to be grasped at once. Mary looked around her, as if for help; lifted her eyes once more to the sky, on which floated a few gray clouds, whose edges had caught a crimson tinge from the glowing west; then, turning them to Mr. Merton, said, softly, "The Cap'in make 'em?"

"No, Mary," answered Mr. Merton, gravely, while Edward laughed, "He who made them is greater than the Captain. He made the Captain, and me, and you, and your father and mother, and everybody."

The expression of thought in Mary's face deepened, and, after a moment's pause, she asked, "What he name?"

"God."

The poor child had never heard the name except in blasphemy; it conveyed no meaning to her ear; but her attention was aroused, and she listened with interest while Mr. Merton told, in simple language, the story of the creation, and talked to her of the good Father in heaven, who made her, and gave her all she had.

That evening, at a later hour, Mr. Merton, calling the children into his state-room, knelt with them and offered a simple prayer, such as they could understand, thanking God for the pleasures and the blessings of the day, asking

his pardon for their faults, and his protection of them during the night. While this little scene passed in the state-room apart, it was strange to see the different manner in which it affected each of those in the other cabin. Katy Van Dyke drew near, that she might hear the words of the prayer, whose indistinct murmur only reached her. Capt. Ross rose and paced the cabin with troubled step; and the brow of Dick Van Dyke grew black as night. Dick sat mending a net by the wax lights furnished from the stores of Capt. Ross himself. As Mary reëntered the cabin from Mr. Merton's state-room, and approached to bid him good-night, he pushed her almost fiercely away, crying, "Get to bed, and don't be a botherin' me! — I'm busy."

Dick Van Dyke was accustomed to take his breakfast at an earlier hour than suited Capt. Ross. He was sitting alone at the table, the next morning, — Katy being engaged in an inner cabin, where her cooking was done, — when he heard Mr. Merton call from his state-room window to the children, who were at play upon the beach. One who had seen him at that moment might well have been startled at the dark frown that gathered on Dick's brow, and the set expression that stamped itself upon his mouth. He ceased eating, and, turning round in his chair, watched the door through which the children must enter, if they obeyed the call. They came. As they ran, with bounding steps, and bright, happy faces, through the outer saloon, his deep, harsh voice ordered Mary to come to him.

"I goin' to Mr. Merton," she replied. Without rising from his seat, bending his body forward and stretching out his long arm, Dick laid a gigantic hand on the child's shoulder, and, shaking her violently, uttered one of his deepest oaths, adding, "You're a goin' to do jist what I tell you! Now, stan' there, an' wait on me, ef you don't want a boxin'!"

The child, unaccustomed to such usage, grew pale, trembled, and sobbed out, "O, daddy! you hurt me so!"

"I'll hurt you worse nor so, ef you don't stop yer snivellin'."

Another great sob from the child, and Dick's powerful hand swung back for a blow, which, had it fallen, must have crushed her; but it was caught, ere it touched her, in one small and white, whose grasp was like that of an iron vice, while, in a voice deep and low, — the voice of concentrated passion, — Captain Ross exclaimed, "Would you kill the child?"

For an instant, the two men glared at each other with tiger-like fierceness; then the calmness of contempt came over the features of Captain Ross, and he stepped back from the table towards Mr. Merton's state-room. Dick Van Dyke arrested him, however, with "Cap'in Ross, you call yerself a gentleman, an' I'm nothin' but a poor fisherman; but you would n't ketch me a goin' to yer house an' tryin' to set yer own child agin you. Mary was a good child enough till you and yer friends come here and larned her to read, an' sot her up to think she was better 'an me. She used to follow me everywhere, jist like a tame kitten; an' now I never see her except she's a trottin' after you. I think you'd better take her 'long with you, when you go!"

"Nothing would please me better," cried Captain Ross, quickly. "If you will give her to me, I promise you she shall have all the care and attention that I would give to my own daughter."

"I's a poor man, Captain Ross, an' don't give nothin' for nothin'," said Dick Van Dyke, with a dark scowl, as, raising his long, lank form from his seat, he stalked sullenly out, passing, as he went, his wife, who was entering the cabin to prepare the table for her lodgers.

The weeping child at once attracted Katy's attention, and her bronzed face flushed, and her eyes sparkled with anger, as Mary showed the shoulder on which the heavy hand had left its mark. She took the child in her arm

and kissed and soothed her as tenderly as the most delicate of her sex could have done.

While this little scene was passing in the cabin, Captain Ross went to Mr. Merton's state-room. He found Edward there, reading aloud a chapter in the Bible. Sending him away, he gave Mr. Merton an account of Dick's cruelty to the child, and of his contest with him, and concluded by saying: "After all I have told you of this child, and the feeling she has awakened in me, you cannot wonder, I am sure, that I am unwilling to leave her in the hands of such a ruffian. You will not refuse to aid me in delivering her from such a fate?"

"I will do all I can for you and your protegée. This man's aversion to having her taught reconciles me, more than anything else could do, to your plan; but you must let me talk to the mother before I can decide," said Mr. Merton. Then, as he saw an impatient movement from Capt. Ross, he added, "And that I will do immediately."

As he ceased speaking, Mr. Merton passed into the outer cabin, where Katy Van Dyke still sat, with her arm around the little girl, who, already forgetful of her sorrows, was beginning to prattle in her usual cheerful manner. Mr. Merton held out his hand to her as he seated himself; and, leaving her mother, Mary nestled to his side.

"You likes children, sir," said Katy.

"Yes," answered Mr. Merton, with a kindly smile, "and I believe children like me."

"I dare say them do, sir, an' I'm sure it's very good in you to take notice o' my gal; an' yet I'm a goin' to ax you not to do it, for, you see, sir, my man don't like it."

"I am sorry for that, Mrs. Van Dyke, — particularly sorry, because there are some things she ought to learn, which your man is not very likely to teach her."

"You see, sir, we be poor people, and han't much larnin', an' we don't like to have her sot up to think she's better 'an us."

"Do you think that would be the effect of teaching her from that book which commands children to honor their father and mother?"

"May be not that, exactly, sir; but, you see, we don't purtend to be no great things, an' she could n't hardly help looking down on us, when you had made a lady of her."

"I am not anxious, my good woman, to make a lady of your child. I only desire, with God's help, to make her a good Christian. You have no objection to that, I suppose."

"Well, I don' know, sir. Dick would n't like it, I reckon; but, then, I know better, because I was brought up to the 'Sylum, an' larned the commandments, an' the Lord's prayer, an' the catechize; an' I could spell out a chapter in the Bible, pretty smart; an' I allers carried the Bible with me what they gived me at the 'Sylum when I went away to the farm in Jersey. It 's up in that 'ere berth, somewhere, now. I 'd show it to you — for it had a right purty red kiver — but there 's so many things 'pon top on it, 't would be hard to find."

"Well, I don't believe you 've been any the worse for what you were taught at the Asylum. I don't believe that any of those women on the beach, who never learned these things, are any smarter than you are."

"Smarter!" ejaculated Katy.

"I doubt if they are as smart," said Mr. Merton.

"You may well say that!" rejoined Katy, with a self-satisfied air. "Why, I 'd bake a batch o' bread while they been a mixin' the emptyin's; and I should like to see any other man on the beach look like my man!"

"Then your learning has done you no harm for this world; and when you are drawing near to another, I think you will not be sorry to remember some things you have read in the Bible. And now are you not willing that your child should have the same advantages with yourself?"

"Bless your heart an' soul, 't an't me! I 'd like her to larn everything; but Dick don't like it."

"Suppose Dick wanted to kill your child, — would you consent to it?"

"Now, don't, sir, — don't ye talk so! It makes me feel all up in a heap, like, to hear you talk about Dick killing the child."

"It is worse to kill the soul than the body, Mrs. Van Dyke; and your husband is killing this child's soul, by refusing to have her taught any good thing."

"Soul or body, killin' 's killin', an' I'm sure I'd be as sorry as you if harm should come to the child; but, seems to me, you could n't do no great sight o' teachin', the little while you'll be here, — nothin' worth quarrellin' with Dick about."

"That is very true, — we could not do much for her here; and so Capt. Ross would like to take her with him, and keep her until she has been taught all that it is most desirable for her to know."

"Take the child! — take my Mary!" cried Katy, drawing the little girl to her, as if she feared that Mr. Merton would even then carry her off.

"Not without your consent," said Mr. Merton, with a smile. Then, with a grave and almost stern manner, he added, "But you must think seriously on the responsibility that rests upon you, before you give an answer to this offer. Think what may be the consequences of keeping that child here. Worse things than that may come of it." And he touched the discolored spot which Dick's hand had left on the child's shoulder.

"O, that 's no sich great things!" exclaimed Katy, trying to draw Mary's dress over it, as she spoke. "Dick was mad like when he did that. You see, sir, he loved the child, an' he could n't bear, nohow, to see her a givin' him up for you an' the cap'in, — that 's jist Dick's natur'. Why, he used to have a great Newfoundland dog, — the beautifullest cretur' I ever did see, — an' Dick loved him so, he never liked anybody else to play with him; an' the dog took to

follerin' another man, an' Dick jist called him out there on the beach, an' shot him down, — that 's jist his natur', you see."

"A very dangerous nature," said Mr. Merton, looking with deeper compassion upon the child who was subject to one of such fierce, unbridled passions.

His sad thoughts were broken by Katy's suddenly asking, "What makes Cap'in Ross want the child, I wonder? He 's got his own little boy, an' I han't got nothin' but Mary."

"He is very fondly attached to your little Mary. He says she is very like his wife."

"Like the cap'in's wife! Where 's she?"

"He does not know. Five years ago, she sailed from England, to join him in America, with an infant child, — a girl, who, had she lived, would now have been about the age of your Mary. They have never been heard of since."

An expression of wonder and anxiety — one might almost have said of fear — came over Katy's face as she listened.

"Goodness! gracious! me!" she exclaimed, as Mr. Merton concluded, with an emphatic pause between each word. "If this an't the strangest thing! His wife an' child! — an' never hearn of since! — an' jist the age o' my Mary! Well! But stop — I must talk to Dick." And she sprang up from her seat, and hastened to the outer door: there she turned, and, taking a key from her pocket, unlocked a state-room, entered, and, removing the key to the inner side of the door, locked it again. Her movements had excited Mr. Merton's curiosity. Could he and his friend Capt. Ross have looked within that state-room, a great change would have been wrought in the life of more than one of those to whom we have introduced the reader. But the day and the hour had not yet come. The future, with its tests, was to separate yet more widely the evil and the good, — with its discipline to perfect the one, and to confirm the other, — ere the mystery which that state-room concealed should be made known. And so Mr. Merton accused himself of folly in

attaching any importance to the exclamations of an ignorant woman, who was accustomed to exclaim on very slight occasions, and turned to a book for amusement. And Capt. Ross, looking into the cabin, and seeing him so employed, and being too much irritated by his seeming want of sympathy to address him, went hastily out, and started, with that desire of motion which impatient spirits often feel, on a rapid walk up the beach. And there, separated from them but by that thin plank door, stood Katy Van Dyke before a trunk, now but half filled with the various articles of a lady's and a child's wardrobe. Katy had buried her hand deep beneath dresses and linen, and had just grasped the object of her search, when a shadow falling through the little window caused her to look up, and she met the eyes of Capt. Ross. She trembled, and turned pale; but, without noticing her, — without, it may be, any consciousness of what he had seen, — he passed on his way. The next minute, Katy drew forth her hand; and one who had stood beside her would have declared that he met again the eyes of Capt. Ross, though they looked at him now from a miniature, and with a happier and tenderer expression than they had lately worn.

"I thought I seed him before, when he first comed," soliloquized Katy. "They used to tell me at the 'Sylum 'bout God, — how he knowed everything. I did n't much b'lieve it after I come here; but now I know it 's all true. He bringed the cap'in here for his child, an' the child he must have. I must manage it somehow; but I must n't tell Dick about this, if I can help it, — there is n't no tellin' what he might do; and I must n't tell the cap'in, — he might get Dick into trouble. I must jist let him take the child, quiet like, to edicate, as he says." The flow of thought paused here for a moment; then proceeded with, "An' so I can make a bargain for her to come home here sometimes — the darlin'! An' when she grows a beautiful lady, like her mammy, she 'll marry a rich man; an' them 'll do lots for

us, if them think she be ourn. An' when me an' Dick's dead, them 'll know; an' then all 'ill be right."

All right, poor Katy! It may be that, when that great change comes to you and to Dick, a new light shall break upon you, and you shall find that, to be "all right," we must be *wholly* obedient to God's commands, *wholly* submissive to his will; not seeking our own ends, or striving to grasp that which he has not given us.

The trunk secured, the state-room locked, and the keys once more in Katy's pocket, her next act was not, as might be supposed, to seek Dick, and win his consent to the plan she contemplated with such satisfaction. No; Katy's was a firm, quiet spirit, — she was in no haste. Dick would be there an hour hence as well as now; and the breakfast had been already too long delayed, and must be first attended to; so the coffee was made, and the "cap'in" recalled. The gentlemen seated themselves at table, Katy poured out the coffee, and all went on as usual. Then Katy, while the gentlemen strolled out to the tent, and the children went to play, remained in the cabin till every trace of the disorder occasioned by breakfast was removed. At last she was at liberty; and, going out, she strolled leisurely to a place on the shore, nearly half a mile from the ship, where Dick was busily at work caulking an old yawl. Dick looked up as he heard her step, but he did not speak; and she herself seemed in no hurry to begin the conversation. When she did speak, her remark was, or seemed, far away from the subject of her thoughts.

"You 'll want a new boat soon, Dick," she said. "This old thing won't last long."

"I 'd like to know where the money 's to come from to git a new boat. You must ha' fund a purse o' goold."

"Well, may be I has."

"I 'd like to see some on it."

"An' I come to show you."

Dick looked up with aroused attention, and Katy went on.

"You'll make more a sellin' that gal o' ourn than you will a beatin' on her."

Dick turned back to his work, with a muttered curse on the child and Katy.

"You may cuss, if you will, but I tell you, you kin."

"An' what fool's to buy her?"

"The cap'in 'ill buy her." Dick thundered out a bitter malediction on the "cap'in," but Katy proceeded quietly to add, "I should n't wonder if he'd give a hunder for her."

"A hunder! If he wants her, he must give me five hunder down."

"Well, I'll tell him so. It's lots o' money, though. May be he'll give three hunder."

"No, five an' be ——" We omit the oath.

"Well, five 'ill be better, if we can git it; but better let him take her, anyhow, for I an't a goin' to have her beat."

"I'll beat her, an' you too, if you jaw me!" was the angry rejoinder.

"No, you won't, Dick. You might lift your han' to me, but you could n't look in my face an' let it fall. I an't a goin' to quarrel with you, but, now you don't care for the chile no more, I wants her to go, an' I think this is a good chance. The cap'in 'ill give her a good edication, an' make a lady on her, an' she'll marry somebody with lots o' money, an' we'll git more 'an we want."

Dick loved money. Katy had touched the right chord at last; and, as Captain Ross was willing to give the five hundred dollars, little time was lost in completing the arrangement.

One of Mr. Merton's earliest questions addressed to Katy, respecting the little girl, had been, "Have you had her baptized?"

"No, sir," was the answer: "there is n't no parson here; an', besides, Dick dun'no much 'bout sich things, an' I could n't do it all myself."

"You have no objection, then, to her being baptized by me before I leave you?"

"I 'm willin', if Dick be."

Dick's consent was obtained. His successful bargaining had so mollified his temper that he made no objection even when Captain Ross expressed a wish that the name given to the child in baptism should be Violet Ross. Katy demurred a little, but at length, feeling in her inmost heart that she had no right to interfere, she hit upon a compromise. "You can call her what you please: she'll allers be my little Mary."

Before the sacred rite which thus admitted the reputed child of the wrecker into the Christian church was performed, Mr. Merton tried to convey to her some idea of its character and objects. The thoughtful child listened, with her large brown eyes lifted to his. Simple as the good man strove to be, much that he said was a profound mystery to this untaught child; but when he talked of the good Shepherd who was about to receive her into his fold as one of his lambs, her quick sympathies were awakened, her sensitive heart swelled and throbbed with feelings to which she could give no expression, the color came and went in her cheek, and, as Captain Ross, perceiving her emotion, drew her towards him, and bent down to soothe her, she clasped her arms around his neck, and burst into tears.

Almost on the very spot consecrated by the funeral rites of the lovely young wife and mother, Captain Ross now stood, holding his unknown but not unloved child by the hand, and, pronouncing the solemn vows of the baptismal rite as her godfather with pallid cheek and quivering lips, named her by that name which a few short months ago he had thought never to hear again till he heard it among the angels — Violet Ross. The child did not weep again. In awed silence she listened to the pledge made for her, to the words of prayer; and, when the baptismal water touched her brow, she only tightened her clasp on the hand of

Captain Ross, feeling that this, at least, was real, and the love of which it was the symbol, no mystery. Though the meaning of the scene was not fully attained by her, her heart, more matured than her intellect, received and treasured every word, every tone, every look; and years only taught her to read and understand the impression now made that she was consecrated to some high purpose.

The warm embrace, the tender kiss, with which Captain Ross claimed her as his child, the natural sound of Edward's voice asking if she were his sister now, released her from the spell which mingled fear and tenderness had cast over her.

"Papa, is she my sister now? Must I say, 'Sister Violet'?"

"No, no: you must love her; you must love each other; but you need not say 'sister.'"

"And what must she call you? Must she say 'papa,' too, like me?"

Captain Ross scarce knew what to answer. He looked down in silence on the sweet face upturned to his.

"May I say 'papa,' like Edward?" said the gentle voice.

"Yes, darling: say, 'Papa Ross.'"

"And you won't let her forgit her poor mammy an' her daddy, here, sir?" said Katy, drawing near, and addressing herself to Mr. Merton.

"While I live," he replied, earnestly, "she shall be taught to honor and obey her parents."

But Katy's hard, firm mind rejected this, as too much.

"Better let 'lone the honor, sir: that's for grand folks, not for the like o' us. Jist tell her plain not to say 'No' to us when we ax her anything."

"I will teach her," — and Mr. Merton spoke with emphasis, and with a heightened color, as if anticipating opposition, and silencing it, — "I will teach her that there is honor, as well as obedience, due to your position as a

parent, and that only in yielding that honor and that obedience can she hope for God's blessing."

"Well, well, sir, I dare say it 's all right as you say; it sounds good, — though I an't sich a scholard as you; but I 'll trust you, an' I did n't mean to make you mad."

Mr. Merton turned away, a little abashed, and dimly conscious that the sneer on the lip of Captain Ross had mingled something of personal feeling with his sense of duty as a religious teacher in this matter, and had caused him to address his last asseverations rather to the captain himself than to poor Katy.

And so human nature, unsanctified, unsubmissive, wrought in them; and so, perchance, with slight variations, it works in all. Variations there were here; yet the shadow of sinful self-assertion, self-will, lay on every heart, — darker on some, lighter on others. Dark, indeed, was it in the soul of the wrecker, selling the child he had loved and fostered, for gold, when she ceased to please him. Somewhat less dense in Katy, it did not wholly obscure the gleams of affection for her nursling, or of such fear of God as compelled her to a partial surrender of her own will, though she hoped yet to elude the Almighty, and gain more in the future than she relinquished in the present. No less did self-will rule in the heart of Captain Ross, who, having gained the first step to his desired end of making this image of his lost Violet his own, trusted to his own strength and determination to secure the rest. The slight opposition which Mr. Merton offered to him but hardened his resolve; and, even while he listened to his friend with a smile upon his lip, there was a fixed purpose in his eye which changed the smile to a sneer. And even the good pastor, with his confidence in God's overruling power, vindicated the divine authority with somewhat of the warmth engendered by a personal controversy. And above all these jarring interests, all this human selfishness, moved the calm, unhasting, unresting divine will, sending down

its sunshine and its showers alike on the evil and the good, waiting to be gracious, ready to comfort the repentant, and to aid the faintest struggle of the oppressed and imprisoned soul towards light and peace, yet suffering neither change, nor let, nor hindrance, in its own eternal purposes.

CHAPTER III.

"Face and figure of a child,
Though too calm, you think, and tender,
For the childhood you would lend her;
And her smile, it seems half holy,
As if drawn from thoughts more far
Than our common jestings are.
And if any painter drew her,
He would paint her unaware,
With a halo round her hair." E. B. Browning.

Away, away from both lonely beach and crowded city, to the green heart of nature; from the sweep of the winds over the great ocean, to the sighing of the breeze through the verdant forests; from the barren shore, with its shifting sand-heaps, to grassy meadows and flowery slopes; from the thundering shock of the breakers, to the murmuring of the tiny wavelets of a small and sheltered inland lake; from the great aquatic birds, whose flapping wings and discordant notes, seen and heard for the first time, might well affright a timid mind, to the songsters of the grove, flying from bough to bough, and seeming to find in every change a new theme for grateful and melodious praise; from the rude and fantastic dwelling of the wrecker, to the elegant simplicity, quiet, and order, of a gentleman's home; — such were the changes, in the outer aspects of life, to the child whom we must henceforth call Violet — a faint type only of that which passed over her spirit, as her intellect expanded under a generous culture, and her affections unfolded under the influence of steady kindness and affectionate sympathy.

Careful attention to her person, and a dress which Capt. Ross insisted should be such as became his daughter, brought out yet more fully the extraordinary resemblance which had first awakened his interest. He had been curious

to see its effect upon Edward's English nurse, who still remained in his house, occupying now the position of a housekeeper. It was such as fully satisfied him. As the carriage, which had been sent to the stage-road to meet them, drove to the door, Mrs. Wild, the housekeeper, came out to give her welcome to the travellers. Dressed in her neatly-fitting dark merino, with her glossy black silk apron, and her Sunday cap, with its lace border, and trimmings of bright yellow ribbon, put on in compliment to her master's arrival, she seemed a very grand personage to the little girl, whose unexpected appearance, as Capt. Ross lifted her from the carriage, and placed her on the piazza, excited her wonder to the highest degree. Violet fixed her eyes upon the grand lady, who returned the gaze with one no less steadfast. Capt. Ross removed the child's bonnet, and the fresh autumn breeze caught her locks of gleaming gold, and tossed them over her face. She shook them back, with a pretty movement of her little head. The motion seemed to break the spell that had enchained the tongue of the good housekeeper, and she exclaimed, as if soliloquizing rather than addressing another, "The very trick of her mamma!" Then, turning to Capt. Ross, she added, "O, sir! where did you find the darling?"

"I found her at the place on the sea-shore where I spent the summer with Edward; but to whom do you think her like?"

"The very moral of my mistress, — her mamma, sir."

"It is certainly a remarkable resemblance," said Capt. Ross, not disclaiming the parentage assigned to the child.

"And, if I may be so bold as to ask, sir, did you hear anything of my dear mistress there?"

"Nothing, Wild."

Capt. Ross turned gloomily away as he answered; but the child, following him, laid her little hand in his, and, won from bitter thoughts by that light touch, he stooped to

kiss, her and said, "Tell Wild your name; she does not know what to call you yet."

"Violet Ross Van Dyke," said the child, but timidly, and with eyes fixed on him, as if repeating a lesson which she feared to miss.

Capt. Ross replied to Wild's questioning look: "Van Dyke is the name of the people with whom I found her, and who claimed her as theirs. The other names I gave her at her baptism. She is mine now, and you must take care of her for me. I suppose you can find a nurse for her among ——"

"O, pray, sir! If you please, sir," exclaimed Wild, for once forgetting her propriety, in her eagerness to secure to herself the care of the child, whose face had already made an irresistible appeal to her heart. "Pardon me, sir, for interrupting you; but, if I might have the care of the darling, it would n't interfere the least possible with my duties as housekeeper, and I should like it so!"

"And I should like it, too, Wild. I want her to acquire some of your neat and orderly habits."

"O! thank you, sir, — that will suit me nicely," said Mrs. Wild, coloring with pleasure at the implied praise. "I was beginning to feel a little lonely here, since Master Edward grew to be such a man that he did not want a nurse any more."

And so did the little nursling of the sea and the storm find her place in this home of affluence and comfort.

A pleasant home it was, on the southern slope of a hill which looked down on one of those tiny lakes in the interior of New York. On either side stretched many acres of land, which Capt. Ross called his own: those on the west being devoted to the pasturage of a large herd of cattle; those on the east, to the culture of rye and wheat. The houses appropriated to the laborers on the farm, lay between these fields and the lake, forming a hamlet which they had dignified with the name of Rossville; while the

dwelling of Capt. Ross, about a quarter of a mile distant, was usually called the Hall, or, as Mrs. Wild was particularly careful to name it on all occasions, Ross Hall. The parsonage lay in a sheltered nook, half-way betwen the Hall and the hamlet, close beside the little stone church, built before the Revolution, at which the farming population, for many miles around, was accustomed to assemble on the Sabbath. It was a pretty sight, on a bright Sunday in summer, to see the country wagons, carrying gayly-dressed dames and damsels, and driven by farming men or boys, who had donned their best suit for the occasion, making their way through the gorges of hills, or winding along the shore of the lake, towards the gray church in whose shadow reposed the ashes of their sires, and within whose walls most of them had been consecrated to the service of God, by parental love.

Mr. Merton became the pastor of this church when he was still a young man, and to the parsonage which they still occupied he had brought Mrs. Merton as a bride. It is true the house had undergone many changes in the years that had succeeded this event; yet the rooms they had first inhabited still remained, and each of them was so consecrated by memory, each was so associated with some domestic joy or sorrow, that the more commodious and more tasteful apartments, added by the generous friendship of Captain Ross, could never rival them in the hearts of the good rector and his wife. Their children, indeed, as they grew up, liked the modern rooms best, and used them most; but Mr. Merton still loved the study best, around whose window his young bride had trained the honeysuckle that still bloomed through all the summer months; and Mrs. Merton still delighted in the little parlor, which had been decorated with frugal care for her reception, and though she consented to please the children by using the new dining-room on state occasions, she never so thoroughly enjoyed the pleasures of the table, as when it was

spread in the room in one corner of which stood the tall mahogany clock, whose monitory voice had never ceased to proclaim the flight of time, since its dial-plate had marked the day and hour of her entrance into the home of her husband.

Theirs had been a peaceful life, gliding on in a monotony scarcely less than that which marked the earlier years of the good vicar whom the genius of Goldsmith has made immortal. Their children had been healthy and prosperous. Two of them were already settled in life. Their eldest daughter had married a farmer, and removed with him further west — the direction in which lies the American El Dorado. Their eldest son had chosen his father's profession, and had been for two years the pastor of the only church in a small but thriving village, about twenty miles from Rossville. Another son they had, who had just entered college. At home was Anna, just rising into the dignities and responsibilities of womanhood; and Lucy, only eight years old, the pet and plaything of all, given, as the rector and his wife believed, to be the staff and comfort of their age.

Schools there were none in the neighborhood of Rossville, except the ordinary district school, at which the children of the farmers were taught those important branches, reading, writing, and arithmetic. Mr. Merton had been the tutor of his own sons, and, by the request of Captain Ross, he had commenced the education of Edward. Mrs. Merton now proposed that Violet should accompany Edward, and join her little Lucy in her daily lessons. This offer Captain Ross gratefully accepted, till Mrs. Jamieson should send him the French governess for whom she was looking.

And the pretty, gentle child grew into all hearts, and her loving nature gave back, with liberal profusion, a full return for every feeling of interest she excited.

To Captain Ross, especially, her heart expanded, her intellect developed itself, her whole nature unfolded, as a

flower to the sun; and he grew happier and gentler for the influences he imparted. His stern brow lost some of its furrows, and his iron mouth grew less rigid. Often, when Edward, with a boy's active and adventurous spirit, was fishing beside the lake, or seeking wild berries in the wood, Violet sat with book or work at the feet of Captain Ross, while he read or wrote, satisfied to lean her head against his knee, or to feel his hand touching the ringlets of her hair, even though he spoke no word to her. No fear could have made a command from another so binding to her, as was the slightest expression of a wish from him. A very strong proof of this was given during her second summer at Ross Hall.

Captain Ross had sown some very choice wheat in a field through which the children had been accustomed to pass in their way to the parsonage, and, fearing that it should be trampled on, he had the gate into the field on the side of the Hall fastened up, and desired them thereafter to take a path through an adjoining meadow.

A few weeks after, as they were on their way to Mr. Merton's, for their morning lessons, when about half-way through the meadow, they heard the bellowing of a bull at no great distance. It was a startling sound, even to Edward, but to Violet it was terrific. Horned cattle she had never seen till lately, and the gentlest cow was to her an object of dread. In this case larger people than Edward and Violet would probably have looked about for some place of safety, as the animal, uttering its hoarse roar, came rapidly towards them. The stout, high fence was beside them, and it cost Edward but a minute's effort to place himself on its other side. With rapid and agile movement, Violet followed him till she was on the top; but there she was arrested by the remembrance that the field into which she was about to spring was forbidden ground. She drew herself to the topmost round, and clung there with trembling hands, looking back from her dizzy and unsafe posi-

tion, with eyes distended with terror, upon the approaching monster, and then upon the fast-retreating Edward.

"O, Edward! Edward! don't leave me!" she cried, in an agony of fear.

"Jump down, and follow me," replied Edward, still hastening on.

"But Papa Ross said I must n't!"

Edward did not hear — he was far away.

She heard the gate slam behind him, and she knew that he had entered another field, — that she was quite alone. She turned to her enemy. There he was, within a few yards of her. His voice sounded like thunder in her ears. His hoofs threw the dust high in air, and his great horns waved up and down, as if gathering force for the final assault upon her place of refuge. She closed her eyes; her clasp relaxed, and she fell, not on the ground, but into the extended arms of Capt. Ross, who exclaimed, "My child! Do not tremble and sob so — there is no danger now. But why did you not jump down, and run off with Edward?"

"You said I must n't come this side of the fence, Papa Ross!" sobbed Violet.

"And you were more afraid of me than of the bull? Did you think I should beat you?" questioned Capt. Ross, half in jest, and half in earnest, not particularly well pleased to have inspired such fear.

Violet smiled at the question, — for her terror was already gone, — and answered, "I was n't afraid of you; but you said I must n't, and I did not want to."

The childish mind could go no further. She could not analyze or express the feeling which made his will hers. But Capt. Ross felt it, and pressed her closer to his heart, with a thrill of tenderness.

Capt. Ross was subject to distressing nervous headaches, which sometimes confined him to his room for a whole day. He was often delirious for hours, while under their influence. Perhaps we use too decided a term in saying "delirious;"

for he lost the control rather of his words than of his thoughts, — the difference between this and his ordinary state consisting in his speaking out the thoughts and feelings which he would then most sedulously have concealed. He generally refused to see any one but Mrs. Wild on such occasions. She applied the few simple remedies which he would admit; and he relied on her discretion not to repeat his wild words. But he, one day, when Violet was nearly ten years old, insisted on having her with him. Mrs. Wild made various objections, but he overruled them all; and she was forced, after putting some iced water and a sponge on a stand beside his bed, to leave him, and send Violet to occupy her place.

"If I need you afterwards, Wild, Miss Violet will ring for you," said Capt. Ross; which Wild rightly understood as an intimation that she was not to return.

"Come here, my daughter," said Capt. Ross, when Violet presented herself. "Papa Ross is ill, — his head is aching terribly. Will you be his little nurse?"

The child joyfully assented, and the next moment she was seated on the bed beside him, pressing the cold sponge to his forehead. Soothed by the application, for a while the sufferer was still. Then, as he felt the excitement of his system increasing, he said, "You must not be frightened at anything Papa Ross may say, my darling. It does me good to talk when I have a headache; and, though I may say some strange things, I know what I am saying, and it will all do me good in the end."

It was well the child had been thus prepared, or she might indeed have been startled, when she found herself addressed as "his little Violet, whom the pitying angels had brought down to him out of heaven." She was startled. Sometimes she could hardly forbear to spring from the bed, and call Wild; but he would see her quick glance to the door, and, perhaps reading her thought, would check him-

self, to say, "Do not be frightened. It does me good to talk. I shall soon be better now."

And thus passed hour after hour, till, with the cool, tiny hand pressed to his forehead, he fell asleep. How long he slept, he knew not; but the sun was low in the west, and the lengthening shadows darkened his chamber, when he awoke. He felt the same gentle pressure which had soothed him to sleep still upon his forehead, and, opening his eyes, saw the patient but weary little face still beside him. He moved and spoke, and the tired arm sank down by her side.

"My child! are you there still? How quiet you have been!"

"Are you well now, Papa Ross?"

The childish voice quivered as if it scarce restrained a sob.

"Yes, my darling. This long sleep has cured me."

"O, I am so glad!"

"Poor child! Sitting in stillness, and almost in darkness, so long, is weary work for you. Has no one but you been here while I slept?"

"No one but you and me this ever so long."

"And did I talk much to you before I slept?"

"O, yes! you kept talking all the time; but I did n't call Mrs. Wild."

"That was right. But what did I say?"

"You said I was your own little Violet. Am I, Papa Ross? Am I your *own* child—your *own* little Violet?"

There was a strange earnestness in the eyes that fastened themselves on his, as she asked the question. He even thought that tears were gleaming in them.

"Certainly, you are my own Violet," he answered, drawing her to him, and kissing her tenderly, "my dear little nurse! And now you must run away, and tell Mrs. Wild to give you your dinner; and never tell anybody what foolish things Papa Ross says when he has headache."

No subject seemed at this time so interesting to Capt.

Ross as the education of this child of his affections. At first, he had determined to be her sole instructor himself; but, quick as was her progress, and pleasant as it was to have her near him, to watch the expansion of her faculties, and to share her delight, as, the boundaries of her mental vision receding, the illimitable domain of nature and of truth began to be dimly perceived by her, he soon grew weary, as men ever do, of the task drudgery which must attend the early steps of the pilgrim to the temple of knowledge. Besides, there were some things necessary in the education of a girl which no man could teach. He had, therefore, as we have seen, readily accepted the proposal of Mrs. Merton that Violet should come to her for an hour or two every day. But, sensible and excellent as he thought the good pastor's wife, she was not all that he desired to see Violet. He would have her perfect in every feminine grace and accomplishment. Mrs. Jamieson undertook to supply him with such a governess as he desired; but she soon found it was no easy task, and several years had passed away, and he had found it necessary greatly to abate his demands, before he introduced Violet, then in her tenth year, to Miss Briôt, as her governess.

His own description of this lady was, that she was an agreeable French woman, who spoke her own language with Parisian elegance, had the manners and habits of one accustomed to refined society, seemed of a cheerful, kindly temper, could teach the first principles of drawing, and give thorough education to those musical gifts which Violet possessed in no ordinary degree.

"I hope she is a Protestant and a Christian," suggested Mr. Merton.

"She was educated in the Romish church, but seems to have little zeal for it. She is quite willing to attend our church," said Capt. Ross.

"Are you sure she is not an infidel — a follower of Voltaire or Rousseau?" inquired the good pastor, with alarm.

"I am sure that, if she were, she could never induce Violet to hide one thought from me, or to believe that your religious teachings could be mended."

Mr. Merton still looked and felt dissatisfied. Nor was he at ease till repeated conversations with Miss Briôt had convinced him that she was no infidel; and that, though she wanted that earnestness as a seeker after truth which only a divine influence can communicate, she listened to it with a candid and not indocile mind.

"This is better than I expected, though it is not all I would have desired. The teacher of a Christian child should be a Christian," he said to Mrs. Merton.

Miss Briôt soon made herself a general favorite. Under her influence Ross Hall grew gay. Dr. and Mrs. Jamieson and their sons and daughters, having once partaken its hospitalities, were easily persuaded to come again when the summer heats drove them from the city. During their visits the labors of the school-room were relaxed, and the hours passed pleasantly away, with sails on the lake, picnics in the woods, and *soirées dansantes*, which even good Mr. Merton did not discountenance.

These summer réunions had a deeper and more home-felt delight for Violet and Capt. Ross. They brought Edward home for the long summer vacation, from the college at which his father, much to Mr. Merton's dissatisfaction, had entered him when he was little more than fourteen.

And so, into the warmth and brightness of the present, Capt. Ross was passing from the coldness and darkness of the past. Not that he forgot, but that memory grew more tender, — less wild and stormy. He was beginning to build another rest for himself on earth, and he grew more reconciled to the Providence which seemed now to smile upon his designs. That which was but satisfaction at the anticipated accomplishment of his own will, he called submission to the will of Heaven; and, with this semblance of resignation in his heart, there arose a semblance of peace in his

life. Still, when the cheerfulness of those around him rose into merriment, it jarred a chord in his heart whose tones were sad. It was not unusual for him, therefore, to withdraw to his own room, on the plea of indisposition, or business letters to write, just at that point which Charlie Jamieson would describe as the height of the fun. He had withdrawn thus, one evening, while Dr. Jamieson and Mr. Merton were still pleased spectators of the innocent gayety of their children, among whom moved Violet, with her slender, willowy form, and pure and gentle face, the most admired of them all.

"Look at that girl!" cried Dr. Jamieson, as she passed him in the mazes of the dance. "See how proudly and yet how gracefully she carries her pretty little head! Who would believe her to be the child of as vulgar a pair as even Squan Beach can show? If that does not cure Ross of his aristocratic notions, nothing on earth will. Talk of a small foot and hand!—look at hers, sir! And she has the Arab sign of good blood; for her foot is so arched that I believe, if the shoe were off, water would run under without wetting it. And she is Dick and Katy Van Dyke's child!"

The doctor, in his earnestness, had spoken more loudly than he was aware, and Violet, who was standing near him when he concluded, heard the words "Dick and Katy Van Dyke's child." The gay smile with which she was listening to Charlie died on her lips, a bright crimson flush rose to her temples, tears dimmed her eyes, and, after a moment's effort to control herself, she gave way, and, covering her face with her hands, ran out of the room, leaving her astonished partner gazing after her, quite unable to account for her emotion. He would have followed her; but Mr. Merton, who had seen and understood it all, laid his hand upon him, saying, "Better let me go, and you finish your dance. You can take Anna for your partner till I bring her back."

Crossing the hall, Mr. Merton caught the gleaming of a white dress in the room beyond, and followed it through that room into still another, which was known as Capt. Ross' study. Here he had only moonlight to guide him, and Violet had thrown herself upon the sofa in its darkest corner; but the sobs which she strove in vain to stifle betrayed her.

"What's the matter, Violet?" asked Mr. Merton, gently, taking his seat beside her as he spoke.

There was no answer, and Mr. Merton, after a moment's silence, repeated, "Speak, Violet! What is the matter?"

"O, sir! I could n't help it," exclaimed Violet, too reverent to Mr. Merton to maintain her silence, when thus commanded.

"Could n't help what, Violet? — crying?"

"Yes, sir."

"And why, my child?"

Again she found it impossible to answer.

"Was it because Dr. Jamieson said you were the child of Dick and Katy Van Dyke?"

The answer came, with renewed sobs. "I know it was wicked, sir, — but — O! I can't help it."

"I know you can't help it, my poor child," said Mr. Merton, laying his hand gently and pityingly upon her head; "and, what is of more consequence, your heavenly Father knows it, too."

"And is n't it wicked, sir? Won't he be angry?"

"Not at your grief, Violet; for that, as you say, you cannot help; but it would be very wicked, and he would be angry, if, because of your grief, you should forget your parents, and should try to make others forget them."

"And, O! Mr. Merton, must I go back to them? Must I leave dear Papa Ross, and Edward, and all, and go back to them?"

The clasped hands, the little, eager face bent towards him, the quick, fluttering breath, all spoke her anxiety; and

Mr. Merton hastened to soothe her by answering, "Not now, my dear child; certainly not now."

"O! I am so glad! Then I need n't think about it this great while, and may be something may happen before then," said the artless child.

"Take care, Violet! that is a wrong spirit. Listen to me, my dear child, and remember what I say. This is your cross; and you can never find any true happiness unless you take it up and bear it patiently, because it is your heavenly Father's will."

The solemnity of Mr. Merton's words and manner awed the childish heart to which he spoke, and it was in a low voice that Violet asked, after a little silence, "Does everybody have a cross, Mr. Merton?"

"Yes, my child; every sinful human creature, who desires to wear a crown in heaven, must bear a cross on earth."

"But everybody don't seem to have a cross!"

"Every one has it, Violet, but every one does not bear it. Some kick against it, and resist it, bruising themselves, and suffering far more than they would do if they stooped their shoulders meekly to the burden; others flee from it to pleasure, to folly, even to vice. These may be gay, but they are not happy. Their laughter is described in the Bible as the crackling of thorns under a pot; it is noisy, but there is nothing real in it, and it soon ceases."

"Then I must n't try to get away from my cross!"

Mr. Merton understood the sad tone, which said so much more than the words, and answered: "You are here now by your parents' consent, and it may be long before they send for you; but you must not forget that they are your parents, Violet, to whom you owe love and obedience. They always loved you."

"My mother always did."

"And not your father?"

"I don't think he did."

"What reason have you to say so, Violet? I know he is a man of quick temper, and he may have said harsh words; he may, even — I know he did once — have laid his hand on you in anger; but you should not say he did not love you, unless you had better reason than that."

"But he told me himself that he did n't love me."

"Careless words, said when he was angry, perhaps. You should not think of them."

"I can't help it, Mr. Merton. I never told anybody about it; but, that first summer after I came here, when I went for three weeks, nobody but Mrs. Wild was with me, you know, after Dr. Jamieson left me ——"

"Did Dr. Jamieson take you down? I thought Capt. Ross had gone with you."

"He carried me to New York, but he said he could not bear to take me to the beach, and so Dr. Jamieson went with me. He did n't stay long, and after he came away — my father — O! I can't help it, — I wish he was n't my father! — he said he hated me, and I was so afraid of him!"

Violet's sobs, which had been hushed for a time, broke forth again.

Mr. Merton folded her in his arms, with a tenderness he had never shown before, and his own voice was husky, as he said, "My poor child, your cross is heavy indeed; but you know who will help you to bear it, do you not?"

He waited for her answer, and, in an awed whisper, Violet said, "The blessed Saviour!"

"Yes, Violet, he who bore the heaviest cross for us that was ever borne on earth. He is always close beside you, — closer than any earthly friend can be. You have only to ask his help, and it will be given you; and there is no help like his help. He can take away all the burden from your cross, so that you shall not only bear it patiently, but cheerfully. Do not forget to ask for that help to-night, before you sleep. And now good-night, — it is late, and

perhaps you had better get to your room without seeing anybody else."

Violet was very glad to comply with this advice. She was now twelve, and occupied a little room to herself, adjoining that in which Capt. Ross slept. This room had been prepared for her by Capt. Ross, when she was ten years old. It was prettily though simply furnished. The curtains and covering for the bed and toilet were of white dimity. Over the mantel-piece hung a pretty engraving of Raphael's child-angels. It was the only thing in the room not intended for use. Perhaps it is wrong to say that even this was not designed for a useful purpose; for it was a belief of Capt. Ross that all, but especially children, were apt to grow into the likeness of those things which they most frequently contemplated.

"Therefore," he said, "I will have everything in Violet's room simple and pure, that she may remain simple and pure as she is now."

He might well have been confirmed in his theory, and have thought that Violet was growing like the child-angels, could he have seen her this night as she knelt to ask aid of her Divine Saviour, with such unwavering confidence in his love and power as is rarely attained by those whom the world calls wise.

A few weeks after this, and only a few days before Dr. Jamieson was to take his family to New York, Mr. Merton was surprised by a gentle tap at his study-door, at a time when he knew that Mrs. Merton and his children were all away from home. Opening the door, he found Violet there, looking a little frightened at her own temerity in making him an uninvited visit; but his gentle smile, and his kind "Come in, my dear," relieved her apprehensions, and she entered.

"Did you come to see me, or Lucy?" he asked, playfully, as she stood before him without speaking.

"I came to see you, sir, about —" Violet hesitated; then, looking up with a smile, added, "about my cross."

"It is a good sign, Violet, when we can speak of our cross with a smile. But what did you wish to say to me? Is there anything I can do for you?"

"Yes sir, — if you would be so good as to give this piece of money to Dr. Jamieson for me, and ask him to send it to my father and mother."

She handed a five-dollar gold piece to Mr. Merton, who, holding her hand with the money in it, asked, "Where did you get this, my child?"

"Papa Ross gave it to me to send to New York, by Lizzie Jamieson, for anything I wanted. So it's mine, sir, to do what I please with."

"And you would rather do this with it than anything else?"

Violet was very truthful, and she corrected this by saying, "I think I ought to do this with it."

"But there is something else you would rather do. May I ask what that is?"

"I wanted to embroider a pair of slippers for Papa Ross, for Christmas, and I would have liked so much to have got the canvass and pattern and the worsted, and to have done it all without his knowing; but I can't now," and a slight tremor in the childish voice, and a little moisture in Violet's eyes, showed how great was the sacrifice.

"Do you not think," asked Mr. Merton, "that the best way of sending this would be for you to write a few lines to your father and mother, and to enclose this in the letter, and give it to Dr. Jamieson?"

"Will you give it to him for me, sir? I cannot talk to him about it so well as to you."

"Perhaps it would be better to ask your Papa Ross to give it to him. He might be hurt to find that you had any secrets from him."

"I don't want to have any, sir. I only thought it might

make him feel badly. Papa Ross does not like me to think about them."

"If he sees that you can think about them without being unhappy, perhaps he will not care so much for it."

"I don't think I shall feel so very badly about it again, sir. You said, you know, that the cross would n't hurt so much, if I took it up."

This was spoken with such a smile, that, as Mr. Merton looked at her, he thought he could already see the light of the crown gleaming through the shadow of the cross.

CHAPTER IV.

> "Rise, aspire,
> Unto the calms and magnanimities
> The lofty uses, and the noble ends,
> The sanctified devotion and full work,
> To which thou art elect forevermore."
>
> E. B. Browning.

Four years had passed away since Violet had been thus taught to regard the great burden of her life not as the decree of a blind, pitiless fate, under which she might, according to her temperament, wear out her life in vain struggles, or sink down and die at once, but as the ordinance of a more than human love, — of love which does not willingly afflict, — which, even while it lays the cross upon our shoulder, offers us the support of its divine strength, walking at our side, bearing us up in its arms, making the rough places plain to our feet, and the darkness to be light about us. Such thoughts, sown in good soil, die not without fruit. This had given to her character a peculiar spirituality and elevation. With less gayety of temperament than her childhood had promised, there was in her looks and in her life a sweet peacefulness, a clear, untroubled serenity, which left her friends nothing to desire for her. With a heart full of tender sympathies and warm affections, which went out in hourly acts of kindness to all around her, Capt. Ross was still more to her than all the world beside. Seldom have parent and child loved each other with as deep a tenderness as did they, — tenderness which with her was so reverent that it made his slightest wish a law.

In the outer life of the Hall there had been little change, except that from its summer circle Edward was missing. After two years of study at college, the boy's health gave

way under the efforts to which his early entrance there had forced him. He was sent home, and Dr. Jamieson said: "Keep him two years at home; it will be better for both mind and body."

But Capt. Ross did not think so.

"The boy wants change," he said; and so he arranged that he should go abroad under the care of a tutor recommended by Mr. Merton. They would go to Germany, to one of its world-renowned universities, and this gentleman would remain with Edward till he had acquired its language, and was fairly launched upon its life. Edward went very reluctantly, and Violet cried herself into a fever at the parting. They corresponded at first very regularly, but of late Violet complained that Edward's letters were "few and far between." However, she was somewhat consoled by remembering that three years of his destined period of absence had passed away, and that the next spring he would return.

And now the warm sun of June is looking down from a sky over whose azure depths float a few white clouds, upon the leafy groves and flowery fields around Ross Hall. The usual sounds of labor or of sport are hushed. So still is it, that the lowing of a cow, or the bark of a dog, breaks on the ear with startling distinctness. Rip Van Winkle, arousing from his enchanted sleep, on such a day, in such a scene, would exclaim, "It is the Sabbath!"

But this is more than an ordinary Sabbath at Rossville. The bishop is making his annual visit, and in hut and hall, under the faithful labors and abundant prayers of their good pastor, many are preparing for the sacred rite of confirmation. Respecting the origin of this Episcopal institution, and the authority for its practice, there are, we know, varying opinions; but none can doubt that where it is approached with a sincere and earnest spirit, in purity and humbleness of heart, like every other public avowal of our faith in God,

and surrender of ourselves to his service, it does truly confirm us in holy living, and prepare us for holy dying.

The youngest who knelt at the altar that day were Lucy Merton and Violet. As, in their simple white dresses, they advanced, hand in hand, to the altar, there was not an eye in the little church which did not rest on them with peculiar pleasure — not a heart, from that of the man of God within the chancel, to that of the rudest laborer there, which did not breathe a blessing on them. Good-natured Miss Briôt sobbed aloud ; and the pale face and sad eyes of Capt. Ross grew paler and sadder, for he seemed to see before him his own Violet, as he had seen her at her first communion after their marriage, when she was but eighteen, — scarcely two years older than Violet at her confirmation.

The occasion of taking such vows can never be otherwise than deeply important. It is the waking up of the moral life. It is the soul girding itself for battle with its foes. It is the one event to which all others in our life's history are subordinate. On that hour rest interests too vast for earth, too enduring for time. All its importance could scarcely be realized by those young girls, though more, perhaps, by Violet than by Lucy, since the circumstances of her life had fostered habits of graver thought than was common at her age. Her eyes were fixed upon the bishop, as he gave his exhortation to the little band of young disciples, and when he said : " If tempted to neglect any known duty, however minute, or however painful, remember the vows you have this day assumed. They bind you to strive with all your might to give obedience to every command of God, encouraged by the promise of his aid to every humble heart which is really desirous to do his will. The youngest of you may do something for him, if it be only to give a more perfect honor and obedience to your parents on earth, from the new and higher motive of love to the great Lawgiver who is also your Father in heaven."

Violet's earnest, thoughtful eyes were cast down at this

point, and her lips moved as if she were repeating the vows which she had already recorded, not in her heart only, but in writing. Miss Briôt, who had taken great interest in her pupil's preparation for this holy rite, had told her that in the church in which she had been educated it was the custom, at the first communion, to place on the altar some written vow, by which the neophyte bound him or herself, with peculiar sanctions, to some performance of duty, or some avoidance of evil; and Violet, finding in the custom something peculiarly attractive to the generous spirit of youth, had recorded in private the vow which she could not offer on the altar. This vow was, with the help of Heaven, to bear patiently, cheerfully, unfalteringly, that cross which Mr. Merton had counselled her, four years before, unresistingly to assume.

It was in the latter part of August in the same year, that Capt. Ross, on looking over the letters which had been handed to him, just as he was taking his seat at the breakfast-table, found one directed to Violet, not with the school-girl address of Lizzie Jamieson, but with that of a very bold, decided, manly hand.

"Pray, Miss Violet Ross Van Dyke," he said, with a smile, reading the name from the letter itself, "when did you begin your correspondence with gentlemen? I think Miss Briôt and I must look into this."

"Not till I do myself, Papa Ross. I like the first look into my own letters; after that, you and Miss Briôt may have them, if you like."

She was breaking the seal, as she spoke, with a smile of pleased expectation on her lips. The first thing to be ascertained was from whom the missive came, and Violet turned with curiosity to the name subscribed to the few lines which were written by the same hand that had addressed the letter. The smile vanished, as she read, "Your Affectionate Mother, Katy Van Dyke," and her face, her very lips, became white, as, glancing rapidly over the page, she found

it written at her mother's request, and in her name, by a gentleman who had come down for a few weeks to the beach, for fishing and shooting, to inform her that Katy was very ill; that she thought she might never be any better; and, wishing to see her once more, entreated her to come to her.

"What is the matter, Violet?" cried Miss Briôt, suddenly, arousing the attention of Capt. Ross, who had been engrossed by his own correspondence and papers. He looked quickly up, as Violet exclaimed, "O, Papa Ross! read it. I must go to my mother," and burst into tears, that sprung as much from her conviction of this necessity as from her sorrow at its cause, or even more, it may be.

It was a conviction which Capt. Ross found to be immovable. He took, at first, a high, decided tone. "It was all nonsense, a perfect absurdity, to send for a child like her. What could she do, if her mother were so ill? He would not listen to such folly. She must not say a word more of it."

Violet obeyed him and was silent, but her pleading eyes and pale face said more than any words could have done. Capt. Ross, in his desire to be firm, became cross. He would not look at her during the whole of breakfast-time, though he had the feeling that she was sitting beside him in blank despair, neither eating nor drinking. He would have left the room without a glance at her, but somehow he found it impossible. One glance, and his resolution was gone. He dropped again into his chair, and drew her to his arms, and Violet, resting her head upon his shoulder, sobbed aloud.

"My child, you do not know what it is you ask for, when you desire to go to Squan Beach."

"O, yes, Papa Ross, I know it all; but I ought to go, if my mother wants me."

"You cannot do her any good, my darling. I will write to Dr. Jamieson to go down and see her, and to take a good

nurse with him; that will be a great deal more serviceable to her than sending you would be, my poor little pet!"

"I dare say it would be; but she sent for me, and I ought to go."

And this "I ought to go" was Violet's only argument, if argument that might be called which was rather the presentation of a feeling than of a reason. Such as it was, Capt. Ross found it to be insuperable, and ended by requesting Mrs. Wild to pack her own trunk and Violet's, and to take the child to Dr. Jamieson's, in New York, to whom he wrote, requesting him to go down with them to the beach, and, if Katy were really as ill as the letter represented, to leave them there, but to bring them back with him, and send them on their way homeward, if, as he hoped, her danger had been greatly exaggerated. His first thought was to go himself with Violet, and to judge for himself of the propriety of her remaining; but from this he was strenuously dissuaded by Mr. Merton, whose arguments probably had less power than the picture he presented of the coarse wrecker, irritated by the presence and opposition of Capt. Ross, and venting that irritation upon Violet.

"Jamieson, with his cool head, will be her best friend in this case," said Mr. Merton; and, partly from acquiescence with this conviction, but yet more, it may be, from sensitive dread of personal collision with Dick Van Dyke, Capt. Ross yielded.

It was early morning, — a somewhat chilly September morning, — when Mrs. Wild and Violet entered the carriage that was to bear them to the nearest point at which they could take a stage-coach to New York. The sun had not yet risen, but in the eastern sky was the bright flush which heralds his coming. The mists of the lake crept half way up the hills, whose blue tops were gleaming with the brightness of the coming day. The busy wrens twittered and chattered as they flew in and out of their house, elevated to the top of a pole high enough for the mast of a ship, and

the louder thrush answered them with a song from a neighboring bush, that rang out bright and clear as a morning hymn to heaven. In the barn-yard, all was active life. The milk-maids were moving about among the lowing cows, and chanticleer was busy in keeping his numerous family in order, and uttering his exulting shouts over the abundant breakfast just doled out to them. In some fields the laborers were mowing down the grass, in others they were spreading out the fragrant hay. All was happy, busy, abundant life on the land, while the unruffled waters of the lake presented a mirror in which the sky and the hills glassed themselves in all their beauty of outline and coloring.

As the carriage neared a point at which, turning from the lake, it swept through a gorge of the hills, Violet, still weeping at her parting from her Papa Ross, leaned from the window to take one long look, through almost blinding tears, at all the beauty she was leaving. She gazed till the last trace of the accustomed view was shut out; then, sinking back into the carriage, with a more passionate burst of weeping, she exclaimed, "I feel as if I never shall see it all again!"

Was the feeling prophetic, or was it but the superstition of a young heart in its first sorrow?

The travellers slept one night upon the road, and reached New York too late the following day to take the boat for Shrewsbury. On the next day, Dr. Jamieson, finding that the extreme illness of a patient in New York would prevent his accompanying them, sent them off, under the care of the captain of the Shrewsbury boat, with medicines and advice for Katy.

"Tell my friend Katy I will come as soon as I can," he said.

His words were kindly meant, but a quick flush rose to Violet's brow at hearing her mother called Katy. As she approached nearer to her parents, and became more widely

separated from him who had taken their place, she felt more that she was a part of them, that their honor or dishonor was hers; and she felt this with a delicate sensitiveness, which her education as the daughter of Capt. Ross had refined and heightened.

It was a long day's journey to Squan, and as they advanced her heart grew heavier and heavier with apprehensions not the less painful because they were so vague. After they left Shrewsbury, she grew so pale that Mrs. Wild feared she was ill, and lamented again and again that she had not brought with her any of her "rue cordial, that was the best thing in the world against the chills." Poor Violet did not answer these lamentations, for she knew not but it might indeed be illness which made this heavy feeling at her heart — this faintness; and which, as she passed the last farm, and came within sight of the well-remembered dwelling of her childhood, made her shiver as if with an ague-fit.

"It 's riding in this country wagon, without any top," said Mrs. Wild, wrapping Violet's shawl more closely around her as she spoke. "I 'm sure I 'm obleeged to the captain for making me bring them warm shawls. This is certainly the bleakest place! I *do* hope Mrs. Van Dyke won't be ill very long, Miss Violet, or I shall have you getting ill too."

And so the good woman talked on, well seeing the cause of Violet's agitation, but delicately desiring to hide her knowledge of it, and hoping, perhaps, to divert her companion's thoughts from that approaching interview which it was only too plain she dreaded. Violet scarcely heard her. She was casting troubled glances around her, to see if the father whom it was her grief to feel that she could regard only with aversion and terror was in sight. Once she believed she had seen him, but, ere the startled nerves had subsided into rest, she saw that it was not Dick Van Dyke, though the figure was little less tall than his. It

scarcely needed a second glance to tell her that this was a gentleman. He was coming towards them, carrying a fowling-piece in his hand. His sporting dress of gray cloth was as little decisive of his condition as dress could be; but his carriage was erect, his head thrown back, and there was a certain air of ease about him, a graceful freedom of movement, which is rarely to be found in untutored nature, unless we go beyond the reach of civilization, among the primeval forests, whose denizens, "lords of all they survey," have never felt the depressing sense of inferiority.

He was looking far away over the ocean, and the noise of the wagon-wheels passing over the coarse sand and gravel was not loud enough to be heard through the breaking of the waves upon the shore, till it was quite near him. Then he turned his head quickly, and gave one rapid, eager glance to the slight, girlish figure that sat shivering beside the portly, comfortable-looking Mrs. Wild. His eyes fastened on her pale face. It was but a moment, and they had passed.

"He's no gentleman, or he'd have bowed to you, Miss Violet, if he did n't to me. A real gentleman would have seen you was a lady, if you was in a country wagon."

Violet said nothing. She was too full of other thoughts, at that moment, to speak of this; but the instant of time in which she had met the eyes of the stranger had shown an emotion in his face, a look of startled wonder, almost of recognition, which might well account for his neglect of common forms. She had scarcely time to ask herself what it could mean, when other interests crowded upon her. She found herself beside her earliest remembered home, and Mrs. Wild, getting out, lifted her trembling form from the wagon.

"Take the trunks out and bring them in here, and then I'll pay you," said the careful Mrs. Wild to the boy who had driven them, holding, while she spoke, the arm of Violet, and assisting her stumbling steps into the house, and

through the hall, or outer saloon, into the inner room, or cabin. They met no one on the way; and it was easy to see, from the disorderly appearance of all things, that Katy's careful hand had not been lately engaged in "redding up," to use her own favorite phrase. They listened, but all was still. Could she be dead? Violet's heart beat fast with fear; then came a slight movement — a moan — and, Mrs. Wild opening the door of the state-room near them, there lay Katy in her uncomfortable berth. Raising her head at the opening of the door, she perceived first Mrs. Wild, and then Violet.

"So you am come, at last!" she exclaimed. "Well, better late 'an never. I are n't dead, ye see."

"Mother, I came as soon as I received your letter," said Violet, advancing to the bedside.

"Then it must a been a long time a goin'; for it was better 'an two weeks ago. I counted the days myself, an' this is Thursday, are n't it?"

"Yes, but your letter only came to Ross Hall on Monday. But you are better, mother, are you not?"

"I s'pose so. I don't have no fever now, the gentleman says; but, then, it's rowin' agin win' an' tide, gittin' well without nothin' fit for a pig to eat; an' Dick are n't much on a cook. But tek yer things off, you an' Miss Wile. Is she a gwine for to stay?"

Mrs. Wild here came forward and answered for herself.

"The captain wished me to come, Mrs. Van Dyke, because he thought I could do more for you than Miss Violet could; and so, if you please to tell me where to find things, I'll try to make the place a little more comfortable for you."

"Ye're very good, ma'am; but, as to tellin' ye where things is, that's more 'n I can do. Dick pitches 'em about so, I should n't wonder if half on 'em was in Davy Jones's locker, instead of ourn, by this time."

"If I knew where Mr. Jones lived, ma'am, and it was n't too far, I might inquire," said Mrs. Wild, innocently.

"I'm afeard ye would n't like to," replied Katy, laughing, "seein' he lives at the bottom o' the sea."

"O!" exclaimed Mrs. Wild, turning away, and beginning her work of setting in order.

Soon she came back to ask if Katy had had any nourishment lately; and, finding that she had eaten nothing since breakfast, and only a piece of dry bread with her cup of tea then, she drew out her bunch of keys, and, going to the largest of the three trunks that the boy who had driven them from Shrewsbury had brought in, she unlocked it, saying, "If I han't something here that will do you good, Mrs. Van Dyke, it's my own fault; for the captain told me to put up whatever I thought you would want, or Miss Violet, either."

And it might have seemed that Mrs. Wild had obeyed the captain's order to the fullest extent, as she took out a bag of what she called "splendid" meal, a bottle of old Madeira, wrapped carefully in cotton to prevent its being broken, a loaf of sugar, and a nutmeg, and lastly a roll of butter, and a small canister of tea; "for I don't think a cup of hot tea will do you and me any harm," she said to Violet.

It was wonderful in how short a time the cabin was made clean and comfortable, the stove bright, the fire burning, with the gruel for Katy boiling on one side, and the kettle hissing on the other, while Mrs. Wild sat immediately in front, toasting at once herself and divers slices of bread, cut from a loaf, which she apostrophized, as she produced it, with "I only put you in here to steady the other things; but an't I right glad to see you now? If it was n't for you, I don't believe Miss Violet would have a mouthful she could eat, this blessed night."

In the mean time Violet was not idle. She brushed out Katy's tangled locks, bathed her face and hands in tepid

water, assisted her to change her clothes, and then ventured to propose that she should sit up a while by the fire, while her bed was aired and made more comfortable.

"And I 've got a wrapper here, Mrs. Van Dyke, for you to put on when you *set* up," said Mrs. Wild; bringing out, as she spoke, one made of dark calico. "I thought you might n't have one, and I don't think an ill person can get along no how possible without one."

Thus dressed, and seated in the warm cabin in an arm-chair, with pillows for her cushions, and a log of wood for her foot-stool, Katy, as she sipped her gruel, found time to look at Violet, and to express her surprise and admiration at her height, her womanly appearance, and her beauty.

"Well, you am pretty, I do declare!" she cried, as Violet seated herself beside her, in compliance with Mrs. Wild's advice that she should "keep quiet," while the state-rooms, including Katy's, were being aired, and the arrangements for sleeping were made.

"I am so glad you are better, mother!" said Violet. "I think a little of Mrs. Wild's good nursing, now, will soon make you strong."

"I should n't wonder if it did; but, then, you must n't be a hurryin' away as soon as I be better. I want to see you a bit. Only think! I would n't a know'd you, the baby what I used to carry 'bout, ef I had n't seed Miss Wile first. I 'membered her right away,—she allers was sich a grand-lookin' lady,—an' then I said to myself, 'S'pose Mary be come!'—I allers will call you Mary, you see,—an' I looked ahead, an' sure enough there you was."

"And you would not have known me, mother?"

"Why, how could I? Don't you know, when I seed you last, you was a little chile, jist so high," putting her hand on the top of Violet's chair, as a measurement; "an' now I reckon ye 're as tall as me, an' a sight purtier 'n ever I be."

Violet answered only with a smile; and, after a while,

Katy resumed: "Ye 've growed as fair as a lily. I used to think ye 'd be brown; but I suppose that comed o' runnin' on the beach. There an't nothin' about you like it used to been, 'cept yer eyes an' yer hair. Them could n't be no beautifuller 'an them been; yer curls always was jist like the goold itself. I wonder what Dick 'll say to you, when he comes back! I 'd like to see ef he 'd know ye."

"Where is father gone, mother?" Violet asked, in a low, constrained voice.

"To York. He had some things to sell, an' he 's a gwine to bring the gentleman's horses an' his man."

"What gentleman, mother? Is it the one I saw on the beach, to-day, with a gun?"

"Yes; thar 's only one gentleman down to Squan this summer."

"And where does he stay, mother?"

"He was bin a stayin' here; but when I took sick and could n't cook for him, he went to Nannie Pinder's. But I guess he 'll want to come back bad enough, an' I 'd like to have him, ef Miss Wile would n't mind. 'T would be one mouth more to fine vittles for; but he an't a speck o' trouble, an' he must be most starved at Nannie's, I 'm a thinkin'. He comes here every night to sleep, an' he 's done me a heap o' good a givin' me physic out o' his box. His physic an't nothin' like Dr. Jimersen's; it 's jist, for all the world, like leetle sugar-plums; an' it tastes like 'em, too."

"The gentleman 's a doctor, then?" said Mrs. Wild, who had finished her labors, and seated herself beside Violet.

"Ye 'd think so," answered Katy, "by the way he seemed to know what to do for sick folks; but he an't. He jist brought this 'are box, 'cause he could n't bear to take doctor's stuff; an' ye see he come from furrin parts, an' did n't think he could fine this kind o' physic in Americay, if he was to be took sick."

Evening closed in dark and chill without; but in the lit-

tle cabin, by Mrs. Wild's good housewifery, all was bright and warm. The wood fire burned with a pleasant, crackling sound in the open Franklin, and cast its ruddy glow over the clean and polished delft ware and tins, in which Katy felt fully as much pride as was ever excited by Sévres porcelain or silver service. Cheered by her guests, pleased with the brightness of all around her, and really finding the change of position a relief, Katy continued to sit up, answering all Mrs. Wild's advice, that she should not tire herself, with, "Don't you be feared, Miss Wile; the tire was to lay down there and see everything a goin' to *distraction*."

"It certainly looked distracted enough when we came," said Mrs. Wild, looking around her with allowable self-complacency, and exciting an involuntary smile in Violet by the simplicity with which she accepted Katy's word in its usual sense.

"Do you expect Mr. Van Dyke this evening?" asked the prim housekeeper.

"No, ma'am; he been't a comin' till to-morrow mornin'. The gentleman promised, when he went a shootin', to sen' Nannie to see to me; but I reckon he forgot, so it's well for me you got here to-day."

Violet was ashamed to feel the glad bound of her heart as she received the assurance that she would not see her father that night; but she could not conceal, either from others or herself, that her spirits rose immediately. She had sat beside Katy, listless and unoccupied, pleading fatigue as an excuse for her silence; but she now asked Mrs. Wild to get the candlesticks and candles which she had promised her to bring. Two china candlesticks and wax candles were brought out by Mrs. Wild and placed on the table, and then, producing her own work, she asked if Violet could not read something for them.

"If my mother would like to hear me," said Violet, doubtfully.

"I'd like it first rate," answered Katy, "if it's somethin' funny."

"Papa Ross put up some books for me; I will see what they are," said Violet. She had little hope of finding anything that would please Katy; for Captain Ross was delicate even to fastidiousness in his taste, and had endeavored, not unsuccessfully, to form her mind on the model of his own. She took out from her trunk and laid aside, in turn, a volume of Sismondi's Literature of Europe, which she had been reading with Captain Ross; two or three numbers of the *Edinburgh Review*, containing some of the most graphic of Macaulay's word-paintings; the Childe Harold of Byron, and the Excursion of Wordsworth; but then came the Pickwick Papers, Oliver Twist, and Nicholas Nickleby.

"My good Papa Ross, what did I ever want that you did not provide?" murmured Violet, with ready tears moistening her eyes, as she selected Oliver Twist as most likely to entertain her mother, though not exactly answering her description of funny. All, we are sure, will approve her choice; for does not this history of a pauper-boy address itself to the universal heart of humanity, whether it beat under cloth of gold or cloth of frieze?

Katy heard the reading with unflagging interest, and her comments showed the impression of truthfulness and reality made by the scenes and characters depicted.

"Poor thing! to be tookt sick in a work-'ouse!" was her first observation. "Well, them wot's better off ought to be glad;" and Katy looked around her on her own comforts with at least as much pride as gladness.

Mr. Bumble and Mrs. Mann received her unqualified condemnation, the sentence being adorned by epithets more appropriate than polite. When the Dodger was introduced, she declared she knew that very boy, and had seen him when she was last in New York. The Jew, again, was an old acquaintance of hers.

"He an't named Fagin, though; but I s'pose they did n't

want to tell what he *was* named. Lor bless yer heart! why, I knowed him this ever so long! Dick sells things to him sometimes; but, I tell yer, it 's hard to get money out o' him. Once, when I was a talkin to him 'bout some lace wot he wanted to git for jist nothin', some boys comed in, an' said they 'd got a good haul, an' he looked as scared as ef I had bin the constable hisself, and sint them to another room. I did n't know wot it all meant then, but I reckon now they must ha' bin a stealin' handkerchers."

"I dare say, ma'am," said Mrs. Wild, quite innocently, not doubting, for a moment, that Katy might reckon thieves and house-breakers among her acquaintance. "But, really, Miss Violet, you must stop reading, for if Missis Van Dyke *sets* up any longer, she 'll be so tired that she 'll be ill to-morrow, in spite of all the gentleman's medicine."

The last words were spoken with a little sneer, for Mrs. Wild had too profound a respect for what she considered the legitimate science of medicine to be very tolerant of any system which attempted to cure diseases by sugar-plums. Katy resisted strenuously at first; but promised, at length, to go as soon as she had heard what Violet had whispered a request to read to her — a chapter in the Bible. Violet selected for the lesson of the evening her own two favorite psalms, the twenty-third and the ninety-first. In reading them, her voice, ever low and musical, was touched to deeper tenderness by the reverent awe, which forced even Katy to listen with some consciousness that the words she heard were of divine authority. For a minute or two after Violet's voice ceased, her sweet, gentle, young face was bent in lowly humility above the sacred page, and while it remained so neither Mrs. Wild nor Katy moved or spoke. They were seated with their backs towards the door. Violet sat in an opposite direction, and, as she raised her eyes, they rested upon the same figure which had attracted her attention that day upon the beach. The gentleman was not now, as then, leaning upon his gun. His arms

hung carelessly at his side. In one hand he held the cap which he had worn in the morning; and his uncovered head was bent as if he too had bowed his spirit in humble adoration, though, from the earnest gaze that Violet's eyes encountered as they were lifted to his face, it might have been suspected that his orisons were made to an earthly shrine. It was but an instant. Her eyes fell; and, with a smile that seemed to mock his own earnestness, he lifted his head to its naturally proud position, and, advancing into the room, bowed slightly to the strangers, and asked, "How are you, Mrs. Van Dyke?"

"Lor, Mr. Duvo! whar, under the sun an' arth, did you come from?"

"Did you not expect me this evening? Is it not convenient for me to sleep here?"

"O, yes! Thar's yer bed, an' I reckon ye'll find it all the better for Miss Wile's handlin'. But you come so softly, I did n't know you was here till you spoke."

"I heard the reading, and tried to move quietly that I might not disturb it."

"Ye hearn the readin'! An' was n't it beautiful? That's my Mary, — I calls her Mary, ye see, but her name 's Vi'let, — wot ye writ the letter to, Mr. Duvo."

He acknowledged the introduction by a bow, saying, simply, "I supposed it to be Miss Van Dyke when I saw her arrive to-day."

"Yes, an' this is Miss Wile," resumed Katy.

Another bow from the gentleman, and then he turned again to his patient.

"But you have not told me how you are."

"O, a heap better! I feel 'most well. I'd like to *set* up all night."

"Your nerves have been probably too much excited; I will give you something to promote sleep." And, in a very business-like manner, Mr. Duvo, as Katy called him, took a small morocco case from his pocket, and, opening it,

selected one of its many tiny vials, from which he poured a few globules, so small as to seem mere grains, into Katy's hand. Katy appeared to understand very well what to do with them. As she took them on her tongue, she met Mrs. Wild's laughing eyes, and asked, "An't them nice physic? Them 's a heap better 'an Dr. Jimersen's, I tell yer."

"Are you a physician, sir?" asked Mrs. Wild, gravely, somewhat shocked at being a witness to this irregular practice.

"I have no such honor, madam," he answered, with a smile.

"And do you venture to practise, sir?"

"O, by no means, madam. I would not presume to *practise*; I only, when I see persons suffering, do what I can to help them."

"An' a power o' good ye 've done me! I will say that before yer face and behin' yer back."

"That 's right, Mrs. Van Dyke; and now I would advise your going to bed as soon as possible."

"Well, I 'm a goin'. Good-night, all on ye."

"Mother, shall I help you?" asked Violet, rising.

"No, chile. Miss Wile 'ill do better, an' you can keep Mr. Duvo company till she comes back."

A smile flitted across the gentleman's face, but Violet did not see it. She colored and dropped her eyes, at her mother's words, more with shame for her than for herself, while a painful feeling of wrong-doing mingled with this sensitiveness to a parent's deficiencies. Mr. Duvo himself she had well-nigh forgotten. She knew not that he was reading every feeling of her heart in her ingenuous face. She almost started as he spoke.

Taking the book which she had been reading from the table, he said, "My friend Oliver — is this your first acquaintance with him?"

"No, sir: I read it long ago. I do not know why Papa Ross put it up for me now."

"Probably because he thought you might make the very use of it you have done this evening. Certainly there is no living writer of fiction who is so universally popular as Dickens. The ignorant and the cultivated alike have smiles and tears for him."

Again Violet colored with a painful consciousness of the allusion to her mother in these remarks.

After turning over the leaves of the book for a minute or two in silence, Mr. Duvo suddenly looked up to ask, "How long do you expect to remain here, Miss Van Dyke?"

"Till my mother is quite well again, sir, and willing that I should leave her."

Nothing more was said till Mrs. Wild, returning, observed that Violet looked fatigued, and advised her retiring. "I will leave a candle for you, sir," she added, turning to Mr. Duvo. "Will you please to put it out when you are done with it?"

A prudent measure this last, suggested by the remembrance that such candles were not commonly found at Squan.

"Better take it, madam. I should probably forget it; and the fire-light will serve to smoke a cigar by, which is all that I shall do before I seek my own pillow. Good-night, madam; good-night, Miss Van Dyke."

He was alone. For many minutes he sat motionless, with the fire lighting up his broad forehead and manly features, on which rested a graver expression than they had worn while others were present. At length he lighted his cigar; watched for a while, with dreamy, thoughtful eye, the wreaths of smoke that curled above his head; then, throwing the remainder of it into the fire, he murmured, "I will stay till I find out if she is like her in more than looks and voice," — a pause, — "and then," — another pause, — "what a pity she is so fathered and so mothered! Papa Ross! Heigho!"

The heavy sigh seemed to rouse him from his dream. He rose, and, after examining the fastenings of the two outer doors, ascended a staircase leading to a small cabin on what had been the upper deck of the ship, and was soon buried in that healthful sleep which knows no dreaming, or, at least, remembers none.

CHAPTER V.

"Things like him must sting,
And higher beings suffer; 't is the charter
Of life.
Some men are worms
In soul, more than the living things of tombs."
BYRON.

LET none think that we are dealing with a frivolous subject when we mention dress. The delicacy of feeling and soundness of judgment which combine to give discretion to character and tact to manner, confer also the gift of taste in dress, leading to that nice adjustment of colors which affects the eye as the "concord of sweet sounds" does the ear, and which is designated by the same name, — "harmony," — and to that perfect suitableness of all the parts to each other, and to the person, place, time, and circumstance, from which results an exquisite sense of beauty pervading the whole. Of a woman so attired we say not that her dress is beautiful, for her dress seems but a part of herself; and, if something in herself forbids us to say that *she* is *beautiful*, we at least pronounce her *charming*.

This gift of taste Violet possessed in an unusual degree, and Miss Briôt had bestowed on it that culture which none is so well fitted to impart as a French woman. The morning after her arrival at the beach, with some feeling, perhaps, that she needed more than ever before to mark in her own person her claim to the respect due to a lady, she was more than usually attentive to her toilet. The result was a rare union of simplicity and elegance.

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We would gladly, were it possible, stamp upon our page a perfect picture of her as she stood that morning at a window of the upper saloon, to see the sun rising from the ocean. Her beautiful hair, untortured by the frisseur's art, fell in nature's own graceful curls around a face whose fresh young beauty the peculiar relations of her life had chastened with a shade of graver and tenderer thought than belonged to her age. She was of medium height. Her graceful neck rose from well-formed shoulders, and her full bust descended, "small by degrees and beautifully less," to a waist which conformed more to classical models than to the demands of modern fashion. Her morning dress of white cambric just opened at the neck sufficiently to show the white throat shaded by frills edged with Valenciennes, and beneath its flowing skirt peeped forth a tiny foot in an embroidered slipper, which Cinderella in her queenly state need not have disdained to wear. She stood gazing at the glowing east, unconscious that another was no less earnestly observing her. Suddenly the broad bright sun arose from the wave, and shot forth his golden rays. With the quick impulse of a Christian heart, Violet's thoughts rose at once to Him whose fiat had called that bright luminary into existence, and she repeated, softly, "God said, Let there be light. And there was light."

The next moment she perceived that she was not, as she had supposed, alone; for Mr. Duvo drew near, and, with a bow and a "Good-morning, Miss Van Dyke," placed himself at her side, and looked forth for a while silently upon the restless ocean and the glowing sky. There was a slight movement on Violet's part, as if she were about to leave him and, turning suddenly, he addressed her.

"What wonderful sublimity there was in those old Hebrews!" he exclaimed.

Violet looked surprised. She did not quite understand him.

"Your quotation from the Hebrew Scriptures I alluded

to," he said. "How little and tame would every other description of the first bursting forth of light seem, beside the simple sublimity of that 'God said—and there was.'"

"God's own word describing God's works," said Violet in a very low voice; too modest to enter into an argument with a stranger, yet with too much reverence for God's inspired book to hear its sublimity ascribed to any mortal mind, without a protest.

He looked at her half-averted and blushing face for a moment with a slightly-puzzled expression; then, as her meaning broke upon him, a smile curled his lip. He would have asked her to define her notions of inspiration; would have tried to give her what he would himself have characterized as broader and truer views; but there was something in the purity and peacefulness of her face which made him hesitate.

"After all," he said to himself, "there is something in this simple, childlike faith peculiarly suited to the weakness of woman. It makes her a thousand times more respectable, and ten thousand times more graceful and interesting, than the free-thinkers of her sex."

And then his thoughts went wandering back into the dim past, in search of one who used to think and speak thus, and whose memory had ever been cherished by him as the type of all that was lovely in woman.

"There is no such description of God's power in the creation of this great sea," he observed. Then, as he saw Violet's lips move slightly, as if she would have spoken, but had not courage, he added, "Is there? Pray let me hear it, if there is."

Softly, tremulously, with downcast eyes and flushed cheeks, but with a voice which gathered strength as she proceeded, she repeated from the hundred and fourth Psalm: "Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters; who maketh the clouds his chariot; who walketh upon the wings of the wind; who maketh his angels

spirits, his ministers a flaming fire; who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed forever. Thou coverest it with the deep as with a garment: the waters stood above the mountains. At thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away. They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys, unto the place which thou hast founded for them. Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over; that they turn not again to cover the earth."

She ended. A low "Thank you" was all he uttered. They stood looking out upon that great and deep sea, the one with her heart, the other with his mind, at least, full of the glory of Him who made it. Not a word more was spoken till Mrs. Wild called from the foot of the stairs to invite them to breakfast.

"Them stairs is a very steep descent, sir," said Mrs. Wild, looking up to them from below.

"A descent, indeed!" thought the gentleman, as he entered the cabin where the breakfast was displayed.

Mrs. Wild's excellent coffee, toast, and fresh-boiled eggs, made a very enjoyable breakfast, though eaten off a coarse cloth, and from cups and plates certainly not of the finest porcelain. They were still lingering over it, when a man's step was heard approaching. Violet's uplifted spoon dropped from her trembling hand, and her face became suddenly pale at the sound. Nearer and nearer drew the steps; her eyes were turned in the direction whence they came with an expression of apprehension in them painfully evident to her companions, when the door was flung open, and on the threshold stood the tall form of Dick Van Dyke, little altered since she had seen him last. The coarse dark hair was beginning to be streaked with gray, and the expression of the face was, perhaps, a little harder. There was no surprise in his cold eyes, as they rested first on one and then on another of the little circle. On Violet they lingered longest; and, rising slowly, like one walking in a dream,

she moved towards him with an extended hand, and lips which strove in vain not to tremble as they pronounced the words, "How d'ye do, father!"

"O! it's you, is it?" he cried, as he took the little soft hand in his great rough palm. "I'm glad ye've come. It's saved me the trouble o' comin' arter yer, ye see."

Violet could not answer this rude speech, but Mrs. Wild replied for her: "Miss Violet came as soon as she got the letter, sir."

A stare was all she received in return. Turning to Mr. Duvo, with rather more civility than he had shown to the females of the party, Dick said: "I got the powder an' shot, an' the lines; an' your man'll be down to Squan to-night with the hosses."

"Very well," answered Mr. Duvo, haughtily enough.

Violet had returned to her seat at the table, but, as Mrs. Wild asked Dick if she should pour him out some coffee, she rose again, and, with hands that visibly trembled, placed on the table opposite to herself a plate, knife, and fork.

"I'll do that, Miss Violet," whispered Mrs. Wild; but Violet did not seem to hear her.

As Dick threw himself into the place thus prepared for him, with no word of acknowledgment for the attention to his comfort, Mr. Duvo pushed his chair impatiently back, and, rising, strode across the cabin to the door. There, some new thought seemed to occur to him, and, under its influence, he returned and asked Dick if there were no papers or letters for him.

"O, yes! a whole pocket-full. I forgot all about 'em," was the answer, as he drew a large package forth.

Mr. Duvo seated himself to read them, and Dick turned to the others to ask, "An' how's my ole 'oman?"

"She was much better yesterday," said Mrs. Wild, who would gladly have spared Violet the necessity of speaking; but Dick saw her object, and would receive no answer from her. He looked full at Violet, until, with a rising color,

a voice somewhat steadier from the indignant sense of wrong which was fast overcoming her fear, she answered, "My mother was asleep when I looked at her this morning early; I will see if she is awake now."

"You'd better see, I'm a thinkin', an' git her some breakfast, too, — d' ye hear?"

Violet had advanced quietly towards Katy's room during this insolent address, determined not to answer it even by a look; but, as the last words were thundered out, her resolution gave way, and she turned to Dick, revealing a face crimsoned by passionate emotion. The head thrown back, the nostrils dilated, the lips quivering, the eyes full of a strange fire, gave a new character to her beauty; and Mr. Duvo, in his admiration of the effect, almost forgot, for one fleeting moment, his indignation at the cause. She opened her lips to speak; but, ere her contending feelings had formed themselves into words, her color faded, her head sank, and silently she again proceeded on her way.

Whatever were the cause of this last change, Dick evidently regarded it with triumph, as a mark of his power; for, with a laugh, he said to Mrs. Wild, "Your cap'n 's spiled that gal o' ourn, I guess, but I'll soon bring her up agin."

There was a loud noise behind him, as he uttered this, and he turned to see the cause. All he perceived was that Mr. Duvo's chair was lying on the opposite side of the cabin, and that he himself was advancing, with rapid strides, through the outer saloon. Mrs. Wild only had seen the flushed brow, the firmly-set lips, the flashing eyes, with which, at those last words, he had turned upon Dick. She only knew, or suspected, that he had started up, on hearing that taunting laugh, with the intention of bestowing elsewhere the kick which his chair received.

Katy was awake, and, before Violet could say a word, she exclaimed: "Now, what's Dick been a doin' to ye, honey? Now, don't cry! 't an't no use, ye see!" for Violet's

eyes had filled with tears at the first word of kindness, and when she would have spoken sobs instead of words came forth from her quivering lips.

"Now, don't mind — don't mind! It's jist talk: he knows I won't let him put a hand on you."

"O, mother! but he's my father — he's my father!" burst from Violet's very heart, in an agony of humiliation and grief.

"An' wot o' that?" cried Katy, her eyes beginning to flash. "If that's all yer trouble, ye might have many a wuss father 'an Dick, for all ye're so proud!"

"O, mother! it is not that I am proud. I am not proud to you, mother."

"No, that you an't; but no more ye mustn't be proud to Dick, an' I tell you he shan't trouble you."

Violet saw that she could expect no sympathy from Katy; that she could not even hope to make her understand those deeper feelings — deeper and more delicate than she had ever known — which made Dick's hard and coarse words and manner worse to her than any physical suffering would have been. The very consciousness of this aided her in acquiring at least the appearance of calmness. She inquired after Katy's health; and, though she heard little of the answer, though her movements were all like those of one whose thoughts were afar off, she went through all the forms of attention; brought her breakfast to her, and stood by her side, even when Dick came to see her, until Mrs. Wild came to offer her more effectual aid in preparing Katy to come into the cabin, where she had arranged a sort of couch, with a box, a mattress, a coverlet, and some pillows, and where, as she said, "it would be more cheerful like."

When Violet went from Katy's room, it was to her own, lifting the strong pressure, under which she had kept down every demonstration of feeling for the last hour, to weep, as only the young can weep, over what seemed to her the des-

olation of her life. Ah! what a different face does sorrow wear when near and at a distance! For years, even in her otherwise most happy childhood, Violet had been teaching herself to look with composure on this hour. She thought the lesson had been learned, — she believed she had taken up her cross, — when, in truth, it was only its shadow that had fallen on her, checking the exuberant life that bounded through her heart, and subduing the brightness of her naturally joyous spirit. Now the cross was on her, in all its leaden weight; now the contest had begun, — that contest through which every thoughtful human spirit must pass, which is to determine whether it is to live for pleasure or for God, — whether it is to pass through flowery paths leading ever downward, or to climb, with painful steps and slow, the empyrean heights where dwells the fulness of joy. A few short months ago, she had vowed, at the altar of God's holy temple, to forsake "the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye, and the pride of life;" and now the fulfilment of the solemn vow was demanded.

Ever fearful of finding about her the dark spot which, be it ever so small, should mark her as the offspring of vulgarity, Capt. Ross had made it an especial object in her education to surround her with all that could refine her tastes; and now she was to pass from the home of luxurious elegance to this, — from the child-angels, which at that moment seemed to stand before her, in all their unconscious grace, their spiritual beauty, to the coarseness of Katy, the hardness and vulgarity of Dick Van Dyke, — and these were her parents! With that name came the thought of what she owed them, — the memory that even these feelings were a transgression of the commandment to honor them; and, with her face still bathed in tears, she sank on her knees to ask for pardon and strength, in the name of One who left a heavenly home, and was subject to poor and ignorant parents, "for man's advantage."

"Perfect peace have all they that trust in Him." In the

stillness of that heavenly communion, her heart grew calm. Committing her way unto him; carefully barring the portals of her mind against all imaginings of the future; seeking strength only to do the present duty, only to bear the present trial,—she could soon go forth with smiles but a little less frequent, a cheek but a little paler, and movements but a little more subdued and quiet, than they were wont to be.

Through the day, Katy was interested by household affairs; but, when the room grew dusky, and Mrs. Wild brought out the candles, she remembered the amusement of the previous evening, and asked Violet to get her book and read. She had read but a short time, when Dick entered for his supper, which had been set aside for him, as he was not there at tea. Violet paused as he entered; but Katy, who had become greatly interested, called out, "Don't stop,—let Dick hear 'bout Bill Sikes. Why, Dick, it's every bit as good as goin' to the play wot yer used to tell about. It's got all 'bout that old Jew-man wot buys the things from you, an' 'bout the boys wot steals hankerchers for him."

"Them better take care puttin' people in them books! I only wish them dare to put me in!"

"Why, wot could ye do, Dick?"

"Them as did it 'ud see wot I could do!" Having given utterance to this threat, Dick addressed himself to the business of the hour, which with him was eating and drinking; and even over him, all animal as he seemed, the magic of the writer exercised its power. He lingered long at the table; and, when there was nothing there to serve as an excuse for further delay, instead of sauntering out, as all expected that he would, to look for more congenial companions, he took a seat beside the stove, lit his pipe, and began to smoke. It was perhaps a half-hour after this that the regular beat of horses' hoofs upon the hard-packed sand of the beach was heard. The sounds came rapidly nearer and nearer. Violet, almost unconsciously, stopped. The

letters swam before her eyes, and her breath came and went quickly. Who could be coming? Could it be her Papa Ross? Had he divined the trials she must endure? and had he followed thus quickly to guard her from outrage,— perhaps to take her back with him? It was a wild thought; but who could it be? She had forgotten the stranger.

"Don't stop,—Mr. Duvo won't mind yer readin'," said Dick.

"Ye've bin a ridin', Mr. Duvo?" asked Katy, as that gentleman entered the cabin.

"Yes," he replied; "this beach is a fine place for a gallop, when the tide is out. But do not let me interrupt you."

The last few words were addressed to Violet; and, as they were enforced by an impatient "Yes, read," from Dick, she began again. But her voice was husky and indistinct, and tears of bitter disappointment, though they did not fall, cast a haze over the page on which she looked.

"You are weary," said Mr. Duvo, gently. "Let me relieve you."

"Wot's she got to be weary for? Read on, I tell you!" cried Dick. But Mr. Duvo, giving to his remonstrance one haughty glance, which seemed to have the effect of silencing him, laid his hand upon the book, and drew it from Violet, saying to her, "I will read; and, if you will permit me to be your physician, as I have been your mother's, my first prescription for you will be that you go at once to bed,— you need rest."

"I don't see wot great you been a doin' to get so tired," said Katy, impatient of the delay in the reading.

"I thank you," said Violet to Mr. Duvo; "but, if you will read, I would rather sit here."

He read till a glance at his watch told him that it was nearly ten; then he closed the book.

"Mary,"—for Dick would never say Violet,—"you read now. Let's see if them gits the boy back," said Dick.

"No, Mr. Van Dyke," exclaimed Mr. Duvo, keeping

the book in his own hand; "my patient must hear no more reading to-night, unless Miss Van Dyke will oblige me by letting me hear what she concluded with last evening — will you?"

"If my mother will let me," she said, softly. She thought it useless to ask for Dick's consent.

"Let yer wot?" asked Katy. "Read the Bible?" she added, as Violet showed the book on which her hand rested. "O, yes! read it. I like to hear you, — it 'minds me o' when I was at the 'sylum. It sounds sort o' good."

As Violet's reverent voice began the words of Holy Writ, Dick raised his lank form and stalked away to his bed, muttering something in which the word nonsense, coupled with an epithet which we will not transfer to our pages, was the only thing distinctly heard. Violet's voice faltered a little as he began to speak; but it soon grew steady again, as she read of the power and goodness of Him in whom she trusted.

"Thank you," said Mr. Duvo, after the moment of silent thought which followed her reading. "And now, Mrs. Van Dyke, you will go to bed."

"I s'pose I may as well," said Katy, "since you say so. I've larned that much o' you, Mr. Duvo. When yer say a thing, a body may as well do it at onc't, — it has ter come."

Mr. Duvo smiled; and, even while the smile rested on his face, Violet, as she glanced at him, thought she could read there the all-subduing will to which her mother alluded.

"And will you yield to my advice as readily as your mother has done?" he asked of Violet; adding, "In my capacity of physician, I am impatient to know that you are at rest."

Violet went, having first ascertained that her mother would not need her; and, as she sank to that sleep from which sorrow seldom detains the young, among the confused and unpleasing images that darkened her mind stood, bright and clear, the memory of the kind, respectful interest of the

stranger; and among her latest thoughts was the hope that he would not leave the beach while she was there, and the wonder by what charm he subdued her father in his roughest mood, as she had seen him do more than once that evening, — and each time, as she gratefully remembered, to shield her from the storm.

Her wonder would have been at an end, could she have overheard a conversation which passed between Mr. Duvo and Dick that morning, at the very hour in which she was undergoing the bitterest conflict with her own heart th[illegible] her young life had known.

It may be remembered that Mr. Duvo had left the cabin that morning with steps that indicated no tranquil spirit. With the same hasty strides did he pass over nearly a mile of the beach; then, returning as rapidly, he sought Dick, and, finding him at some distance from his home, said to him, "I wish to speak to you of your daughter, Mr. Van Dyke."

"Well," ejaculated Dick, apparently too much engaged in twisting a piece of rope to spare time for looking up, "speak away."

"She is very beautiful," said Mr. Duvo; which, to tell the truth, was not exactly what he meant to say.

"Yes, she 's sort o' purty," answered Dick, with a smile which, strange to say, made Mr. Duvo frown.

The angry flash helped him, and he plunged at once, as Horace long ago advised, "in medias res."

"You seem to take great pleasure in tormenting her."

Dick looked up for a moment; then, as he met Mr. Duvo's stern but calm eyes, he returned to twisting his rope, and said, "Well, I tell you, now, Mr. Duvo, I used to like the gal right well; but the cap'in 's sot her up so, she 's jist as proud as Lucy Fur, — an' you know she 's prouder 'an the devil, — an' so I do like to take the stiffenin' out o' her!"

He ended with a low laugh, which made Mr. Duvo press his arms tightly to his own person, lest, not having a chair

here on which to exercise his pugilistic powers, he might use them on Dick himself, — a proceeding which would certainly not have benefited Violet's cause.

"Well," said he, after a minute's effort to master his emotion so far as to speak calmly, "I should be very sorry to interfere with your pleasures, without offering you some equivalent for it; and, as I do not wish to leave the beach immediately, and yet cannot remain to see a woman abused, I want to know how much you will take to give up this agreeable diversion."

"Wot 's that yer say?" inquired Dick, looking up, with a puzzled air.

"I want to know how much money will pay you for giving up the pleasure which you say you take in abusing your daughter."

This was putting it in a form which it was impossible not to understand, and Dick answered, without affectation, "Well, I guess — I don't know, 'xactly — but I s'pose 'bout twenty dollar, or so;" and he laughed as at an excellent joke.

"Very well; add that sum to my bill, and I will pay it, if you honestly keep your bargain, and leave her in peace while she is here."

"It 's a bargain!" said Dick.

"I would rather have knocked the fellow down, but that would not have helped her," thought Mr. Duvo, as he turned away in disgust.

"Arter all, I should n't wonder ef I tookt the best part o' the cargo, when I tookt her," was Dick's pleasant conclusion, as he laughed a low laugh, in which contempt for his lodger's folly was mingled with self-gratulation.

CHAPTER VI.

"Like a star,
Without haste, without rest,
Be each one fulfilling
His God-given hest."

GOETHE. *Translated by Carlyle.*

WITH Katy's permission, Violet had secured some feeling of independence and some quiet by taking possession of the upper saloon, or a part of it, to which, with some aid from Mrs. Wild in cleaning, and some ingenuity in turning trunks into divans, small boxes into ottomans, and a larger box covered with a shawl into a table, she gave an air of something like comfort. Here she generally took her books or work when Katy was engaged in domestic labors, in which, as soon as her strength was restored, she disdained all assistance. By Violet's request, Mrs. Wild usually sat with her; and Mr. Duvo, who seemed but a lazy sportsman, spent much of his time with them. To Mrs. Wild, who found little else here on which to exercise her curiosity, he was a subject of frequent speculation.

"He must be a rich man, you see, Miss Violet," was one of her sage conclusions, "for it 's only rich men as can have such whims as to bring such beautiful horses down to Squan Beach. What could he expect to want with them here, I wonder?"

"Why, he rides every day, Wild."

"But, my dear Miss Violet, does it stand to reason that he bought them horses and brought them down here just for that one hour's ride a day?"

"I do not know any other reason that could have induced

him to bring them, Wild," said Violet, amused by her earnestness.

"Nor I, ma'am," answered Wild, "and that 's just what puzzles me. I do wish you 'd ask him, Miss Violet."

It was not long before Mr. Duvo volunteered the information Mrs. Wild so much desired. He spoke of his love for horses. A good horse, he declared, stood next to a good friend. There was no exercise so agreeable to him as riding, and he had purchased these horses with the intention of making a tour on horseback through the southern and western parts of the United States. He preferred this mode of travel, both because of his dislike to the lumbering stage-coaches, and because he hoped in this way to get more into the heart of the country, if he might so express it, and to learn more of the people, than he could do by following the more ordinary course of travel. Violet ventured to ask when this interesting tour would begin. The answer was not very definite.

"When I sent for my horses, I intended to begin it immediately, but some circumstances have delayed me, and now I scarcely know when I shall set out. When do you go, Miss Van Dyke?"

"As soon as my mother will permit me. Now that she is so much better, Papa Ross will be impatient for my return; and I — I hope it is not very wrong — I have never been away from him so long before, — I am almost as impatient to go."

"Wrong? — no, indeed!" exclaimed Mr. Duvo, with a look which seemed to say that he understood and compassionated the half-revealed feeling that prompted this impatience; then, as he saw the color which that look called into her face, he added, "Squan Beach has no very great attractions as a residence."

Mrs. Wild had not been present at the commencement of this conversation, but she entered in time to hear these last words, and could not refrain from saying, "So I think, sir;

and, if you'll excuse me for saying it, it does seem strange to me what a gentleman like you could find to bring him here."

"O! that's easily enough explained," answered Mr. Duvo, smiling at the curiosity so thinly veiled. "I came here because I was told I should find capital snipe-shooting. I staid longer than I at first intended, because I found a suffering woman whom I thought I could relieve by a slight sacrifice of time, which was of no great importance to me; at least, that was one of my reasons; and now," — he paused — laughed slightly — "well — I believe *now* is *not* so easily explained — I suppose I have got a habit of staying."

Violet soon felt that he had acquired another habit, very agreeable to her, of watching over her comfort, and exercising his singular power over her father for her benefit. He must, it appeared to her, keep a watch on her father's movements. More than once had Dick paused in some rough speech to her, arrested by Mr. Duvo's step upon the threshold, or by his loud "ahem," uttered near by. However Violet might continue to wonder at the cause of this, she could not but be grateful for the effect — all the more grateful, that no claim was made to her gratitude.

Nor was Mr. Duvo's protection the only advantage that Violet derived from his presence on the beach. She found in him a most intelligent and agreeable companion, where she would otherwise have been companionless. To him she could speak of the books she had read, and of the home in which her happiest years had been spent; and he could tell her, in return, of foreign lands; of the gay French capital; of the Rhine — its natural beauty, and its romantic and historical associations; of the glories of the Alps; of the far northern climes, in which day robs night of half her empire, to be despoiled herself, in turn; and, what was dearer, far, to Violet, he could tell her of the cottage homes and baronial halls of England.

Seeing her interest in these last, he one day brought a portfolio to her, and, placing it on her table, said, "I have some sketches here which I think may interest you; they will give you a better idea than mere words can do of an English park and an English home."

Violet dropped her book, and drew her chair to the table, with a countenance glowing with interest.

"Why, one would imagine England to be your own land!" said Mr. Duvo.

"Papa Ross spent several years in England; and I have always wished to know something about it, because he loved it so much; but I never before met any one who had been there."

"Could he not tell you what you wished to know?"

"I could not venture to ask him, for he never speaks of that time."

"And how do you know that he loves England, if he never speaks of it?"

"I know it in many ways. You would not doubt it, if you could see him look at a picture of English scenery when he thinks no one is observing him."

Mr. Duvo took out from his portfolio some sketches in crayon. The first exhibited the front and the second the rear view of a stately mansion, with its surroundings of velvet lawns and ornamental shrubberies, while far in the background rose a line of blue hills, whose misty tops lost themselves in the clouds. Then followed successive views of park scenery. It was ground of which he evidently knew and loved every foot. As he led her through those "bosky dells," and underneath those overhanging oaks, whose lofty trunks and spreading branches told of centuries of growth, she could not doubt that he had often walked there; she felt assured that he had sailed upon that sylvan lake, and had fished in that clear stream.

Violet's interest and admiration had led him, perhaps, to speak more freely than he had intended; for, when, with

girlish inconsideration, she exclaimed, "You know it all so well, it seems as if it must have been your home;" he answered, evasively, "I have been there in my childhood," and became less communicative afterwards.

The first Sabbath that Violet spent upon the beach was a painful day to her. Dick and Katy employed themselves in the morning just as they had been accustomed to do on other days. After dinner, as she was about to withdraw to her quiet room up stairs, where most of her morning had been spent, Katy said, "Come, Mary — it's Sunday, an' we need n't work so hard; get the book, and come read for us."

Violet hesitated; not as to her determination, but as to the best mode of expressing it.

"Yes — come read," cried Dick, taking his seat and drawing out his pipe, his never-failing companion when he was at rest.

Mr. Duvo, who had also been leaving the cabin after dinner, paused at the door to hear her answer. It came, at length, low, but firm, while the flush of shame, for her parents more than for herself, crimsoned her face.

"I cannot read that book to-day; but I have other books, mother, — I will read something else for you."

A curse burst from Dick on the something else; what further he might have said was arrested by a movement from Mr. Duvo.

"I don't want to hear nothin' else," said Katy, peevishly; "an', ef you won't read wot I want wen I ax you, you need n't talk to me 'bout readin' the Bible agin."

"Mother, this is a story," remonstrated Violet, getting near to Katy, and speaking very low and very earnestly; "it is not a book to read on Sunday; I am sorry to disappoint you, but I cannot read it to-day."

"Well, you can let it 'lone — that's easy done!" said Katy, turning away from her.

"But, mother," persisted Violet, "if you would only let me read —"

"The Bible, I s'pose, an' no thanks to you! A chapter 'ill do good enough, now and then; but I an't no parson, to be a readin' on it all the time!"

"But I have other books, mother — books that are like story-books, only that they are true."

"An' I'm sure there never was no truer book 'an that 'bout little Oliver, Did n't I tell you I knowed some of the people myself?"

"But these books tell us about good people, and how we too may become like them."

"An' I s'pose that's wot you think Dick an' me don't know nothin' 'bout!"

"It is what I should like to learn very much," said Mr. Duvo, smilingly; "so I shall be greatly obliged to Miss Van Dyke, if she will bring the book and let me listen while she reads."

Violet gave him a grateful glance, and Katy, with whom he was a prime favorite, rejoined, in a somewhat kindlier tone, "Well, bring yer book, an' let's hear 'bout them good people; but all the good people ever I seed was as flat as a flounder!"

Grateful for the permission thus accorded, Violet hastened to Mrs. Wild, who had told her in the morning that she had a volume of tracts with her. When she returned to the cabin, she found that Dick had left it.

"I know'd he was n't goin' to stay to hear 'bout no good people," said Katy.

Violet was grieved, yet she felt that she had done rightly, and it was a pleasure to find that Katy soon became interested in the touching story of the Dairyman's Daughter. Mr. Duvo, too, continued to listen as long as she read, which was until Katy said it was time to be seeing about tea. Then Violet went to the upper saloon, while Mr. Duvo strolled out upon the beach, and Mrs. Wild remained to offer some assistance to Katy, who was still feeble. Alone, Violet drew near a window, and, seating herself beside it,

looked out sadly upon the sea. The breeze blew freshly in, tossing her curls back from her face. It blew from the south-east. "It is going toward my dear home," she said to herself; "it will find them all just coming out of church. Perhaps Mr. and Mrs. Merton and Lucy may be at the parsonage, but dear Papa Ross and Miss Briôt are walking homewards. I wonder if they are talking of me? Dear Papa Ross! — and dear, dear home! Ah! — home — is not this my home?" Tears sprang to her eyes at the thought, and flowed for many minutes unchecked, as imagination presented a picture of her possible future here, alone, with no Mrs. Wild to lighten the drudgeries of her position; no Mr. Duvo to protect her from outrage; no kind pastor to lead her gently into the path of right; no dear brother, like Edward, to be her companion and friend; no beloved father, to fold her to his bosom, to call her his Violet, the flower of his life, his best earthly comfort.

For the last two days, Violet had refused to listen to the whispers of imagination; she had avoided solitude, feeling that she was her own most dangerous companion. Since that first morning's conflict she had spoken to her own heart as one might speak to a grieved child.

"Poor heart!" she had said, "be still — do not strive to look too far! Do the duty that lies nearest thee, and leave the rest to God!"

But now the rein had been removed, and it was very hard to regain the mastery over herself. At length, however, there came a lull in the storm of feeling.

"After all," she said to herself, "it is not long; in a few years, perhaps in a few months, or weeks, or days, — it may be before I enter this home again, — I shall go to my eternal home."

With the thought, almost unconsciously, soft and low, yet sweet and clear as a bird's, came the notes of the hymn:

"I would not live alway; I ask not to stay
Where storm after storm rises dark o'er the way;
The few lurid mornings that dawn on us here
Are enough for life's woes, full enough for its cheer.
I would not live alway, thus fettered by sin,
Temptation without and corruption within;
E'en the rapture of pardon is mingled with fears,
And the cup of thanksgiving with penitent tears.
Home! home! The home of the soul!
The bosom of God is the home of the soul."

As she sung, her voice gained strength and steadiness, and, with scarcely a pause between, fuller, brighter, more joyously, rang out the strains:

"Jerusalem! My happy home!
Name ever dear to me!
When shall my labors have an end
In joy, and peace, and thee?"

The air was simple, and ere she had completed the second stanza a manly voice from below joined, singing a wordless second in good time and tune. With girlish timidity her own voice faltered, and seemed about to stop; but Mr. Duvo called out, "Pray, sing on, or I shall blame myself for having interrupted you," and she went on even to the end. He was at her side as soon as she concluded, saying, "I must thank you for the great pleasure you have given me; I have been longing for music; and these simple, quaint, old hymn-tunes seem just suited to this place. The grand old ocean and the desolate beach would not harmonize with anything lighter."

Violet did not answer; she was feeling that, with all its approbation, there was in this speech a want of sympathy with those higher emotions which that hymn awakened in her own mind. It was the language of the man of taste, rather than of the Christian.

Mr. Duvo seated himself near the window, and made some remark on the beauty of the evening, adding, "You

should have walked out to enjoy it. Have you been accustomed to a life so entirely without exercise as that you are leading here?"

"O, no! Papa Ross has made me an English woman, he says, in such respects. I walk and ride miles with him, every day, when I am at home."

"And, for want of better companionship, I shall ask you to do the same with me, here. To speak *en médécin*," he continued, laughing, "I prescribe for you a walk of at least three miles to-morrow morning, as soon as you have breakfasted, and a ride in the afternoon of double that distance. Will you take the prescription?"

"The walk, with pleasure,—and the ride, if there is a woman's saddle on the beach, and if I can find any kind of riding-dress."

"The saddle shall be my care; and the dress, I have no doubt, your invaluable Mrs. Wild can arrange; so I shall consider that as decided."

The next morning the walk was taken, and Violet brought back from it, to delight Mrs. Wild, a fresher color and more cheerful looks and movements; and to gladden her own heart, a bunch of wild-flowers, gathered more than a mile away. In the afternoon, at four o'clock, the horses were at the door, attended by the groom, mounted on a hack which Mr. Duvo had hired from the farmer with whom he had found a place for both his groom and horses. Neither had Mrs. Wild disappointed his expectations. Violet's dark merino travelling-dress, by a little exercise of her ingenuity, had made a very respectable riding-dress. It certainly had Mr. Duvo's approbation; for, with an admiring glance at the graceful form of his companion, erect, yet easy, he said, with a smile, "Mrs. Wild has not failed in her undertaking."

"Dear, good Wild! I believe she would have cut up her whole wardrobe rather than I should have lost the opportunity of riding."

"You like riding, then," said Mr. Duvo, in reference to some remark from Violet, as they were returning.

"Better than anything in the world, almost. I like everything that belongs to the land, — not such land as this," she added, looking down on the sands over which they were passing, "but the green, kindly earth, with its flowers and shrubs, its great trees stretching out their arms to you, and its blue hills lifting themselves, and you with them, up, up, towards heaven."

It was the first time he had heard her speak thus; and, as he watched her kindling eye, and saw the glow upon her cheek, he smiled at her girlish enthusiasm.

"And the sea," he said, — "have you no admiration for the sea?"

She turned for a moment to gaze upon it, and he was surprised, when she looked at him again, to perceive that her cheek had grown paler, and her eyes had lost their happy light.

"It awes me!" she said, with a slight shudder. "You will think it very silly and childish, I am afraid, but, ever since I have been here, the sea has seemed to me as if it were associated in some way with some great sorrow, past or to come. Its waves seem to beat upon my heart. I do not like to think of it."

Strong as her language was, Mr. Duvo saw there was no affectation in it; and, without speculating on the origin of the feeling, he addressed himself at once to the task of dispelling it.

"Now for a gallop;" he cried, and away they went over the hard, smooth sands of the beach. Her bonnet fell back upon her shoulders, and the wind swept her hair far back from her face, leaving her white temples uncovered. Her eyes sparkled with the excitement of that gallop; her flushed cheeks and red lips were moist with the spray which the sea-breeze dashed in their faces.

"Them do ride beautiful, an' she is a purty creetur!"

said Katy, as she stood with Mrs. Wild, watching their approach.

"That she is, Missis Van Dyke," answered Mrs. Wild; "and Mr. Duvo is a handsome man, too, if he was n't so old."

The good housekeeper, it was evident, was weaving a romance with Mr. Duvo and Violet for its hero and heroine.

"Ole, Miss Wild? Why, how ole would you call him, now?" questioned Katy.

"Well, I should n't wonder if he was well on to thirty — say twenty-nine or twenty-eight."

Mrs. Wild was willing to make every possible abatement in favor of so handsome a man.

Mr. Duvo was nearer to her or had quicker ears than she thought. He heard her last words, and, conjecturing that they applied to him, though ignorant of their connection, he said, as he passed her, "One more year, Mrs. Wild, — twenty-nine."

Mrs. Wild turned quickly, and saw him looking back at her as he entered the house, with his usually grave face full of fun.

"O, Mr. Duvo! I did n't think you could hear me!" she exclaimed, adding to herself, "I don't believe he 's a day over twenty-eight!"

We have spoken of Mr. Duvo as a traveller. His travels had extended into the East. He had walked among turbaned Turks, and trodden the streets of the Holy City. A good draughtsman, his portfolio was filled with sketches of places and persons that could not fail to kindle the enthusiasm of a young, fresh heart. He proposed to Violet to copy some of those in which she seemed most interested; and, when she acknowledged that she had small skill with the pencil, and feared she could not do them justice, he encouraged her to try, offering her his instruction. Whether he had any object in this beyond the doing a kind action to

a pleasing young girl, we do not pretend to say; but he certainly did her a more essential service than even her improvement in drawing could have been considered, by furnishing pleasant occupation for many of her hours. She rarely saw her father of late, except in the evening, when they all assembled in the cabin for their readings from Dickens, which were still continued. Dick had never entered the "drawing-room," as Mrs. Wild had named Violet's retreat, and he seldom took his meals with the rest of the family. He had more than once alluded to Mr. Duvo's departure in a manner which led that gentleman to think that it would not be an altogether unwelcome event. He thought it probable, with what truth we know not, that, as the nights grew longer, and the sea began to be tossed by autumnal winds, the presence of a stranger on the beach for any great length of time was not judged desirable. In this idea, whether correct or not, he was confirmed by observing, one evening, when a strong south-easterly wind was blowing, the increased eagerness with which Dick and two or three of those men who were his usual companions hurried to their look-out on the cross-trees, and the evident dissatisfaction in their looks and tones as they announced no large ship in the offing. Probably Violet's presence was not considered as so likely to interfere with their designs; at least, she had no intimation that her remaining would be inconvenient. Mr. Duvo determined that it should take something more than an intimation to induce him to leave her alone at Squan. He felt assured that she knew nothing, remembered nothing, — if, indeed, her childhood had been witness to such scenes, — of those dark deeds which popular rumor had so generally attributed to the residents on the beach, that the charge had reached the ears even of a stranger like himself. If he had ever doubted her ignorance of these deeper shadows, glooming over the life which was one day, perhaps, to be her own, the doubt would have been removed when he heard her say, with a sweet hopefulness,

which touched him more than sullen despondency could have done, "After all, I don't think Squan Beach would be so very bad a home, if one could only have all those they loved about them."

"Well, cannot you persuade Capt. Ross to build a summer-house here? It would be an agreeable retreat during the warm months."

He spoke mockingly; but she answered, in simple sadness, "Ah, no! when I come here Papa Ross must go back to the South. He ought to have gone long since; but he was so good he would not leave me."

"And why should you not go with him? Would you not like to go South?"

"O, more than I can tell you; but I cannot go. You know I do not belong to Papa Ross, and my father and mother would never consent to my leaving the state in which they live."

"And has that kept Capt. Ross here?"

"Not always. For many years he had no desire to return to his early home; but lately, since Edward went abroad, he has heard some things that have troubled him very much, about his people. I think now he would be very glad to go to them, if he could take me with him. Sometimes I fear that I have been very selfish in not trying harder to persuade him to go to them, and leave me here. It is a great thing to have the well-being of so many of our fellow-creatures dependent upon us — a great thing!"

"But has not Capt. Ross a good agent at home?"

"Yes, I suppose so; but that is not the same thing, you know, Mr. Duvo."

"Indeed, you give me too much credit for knowledge. It seems to me it would be very much the same thing, or, perhaps, a little better; for it is my experience that a good agent gets more out of a property than the owner can."

"May be so; but that is not the thing." She paused, but there was a sweet seriousness in her still, childlike face,

which made him anxious to know more of her meaning; and he asked, with a smile, "Then what is the thing?"

She met the smile, and colored a little, as she answered, "I believe you are laughing at me, Mr. Duvo; and I deserve it, too, for speaking on such a subject to one who must understand it so much better than I do."

"Indeed, as I have already told you, you do too much honor to my understanding; and, so far from laughing at you, I am very much interested to know what this important *thing* is, which seems greater to you than all the profits of a fine property, like that of which I have been told Capt. Ross is the owner, at the South."

"O! the difficulty at the island," said Violet, quite relieved at having the abstract question narrowed down to this particular, "the difficulty at the island was about the people. You know an agent could not be expected to care for their comfort and improvement as a master should. Besides, even if he did, it would not relieve the master from his obligations."

"Obligations?—to whom?" asked Mr. Duvo, somewhat abruptly.

"I mean his obligations to do that work which God appointed especially for him."

The words conveyed no very definite meaning to Mr. Duvo's ears, and, after a little silent thought, he said, "I fear you will think me very stupid; but I really must ask you to explain what you mean by the work which God appoints especially for any one. How can we know anything of God's especial appointments?"

"Why, do you not think that he appoints to each of us our lot in life?"

"Certainly. And so you think there is appended to every man's lot an appropriate work? Well, suppose that to be so; what objection have you to his procuring some one to do this work for him?" asked Mr. Duvo, smiling at what

seemed the simplicity of her thought, and quite confident in the superior practical wisdom of his reply.

"It would be better than that it should not be done at all. Sometimes, perhaps, a man may want the faculties necessary to do his own work, and then it is well to have some one to do it for him; but, except in such a case, I think it is better for each one to do his own work. Do you think I am wrong in believing so—in thinking that God must fit each man for his place and his work?"

"And how shall each know his peculiar work?"

"Because it will grow naturally out of his place."

"I am not sure that I apprehend your meaning rightly yet. Let us see; for example, what is your work?"

He fixed his smiling eyes upon her; but they grew grave with the fear that he had taken too great a liberty, when he saw how the crimson blood rushed to neck, and cheek, and brow. He would have apologized; but ere he could frame his thoughts in fitting words, the flush faded into more than usual paleness, and from lips that trembled came, faltering and low, the words, "To come here and make my home as happy as I can."

Mr. Duvo sat silently for a few minutes, and then, rising, went out upon the beach for a stroll, companioned by a cigar, and a crowd of thoughts not all pleasing. The words of Violet—simple words, involving a great idea—came back to him in the very tones in which she had uttered them. Again and again his mind traversed around the words, "obligations to do that work which God appointed especially for him;" and each time the revolution of thought brought him to the same point: what work had been appointed for him, and how had it been done? The answer to these questions was not satisfactory, and he escaped from them to think on her who had suggested them; but still, as he brought her face before him, his tormenting fancy, instead of presenting it lighted up with girlish sportiveness, or excited by the pleasure of a ride, showed it with the sweet

eyes bent on his with earnest gravity, while from the parted lips issued again the ever-recurring words, "obligations to do that work which God appointed especially for him."

"And these are not mere words to her," thought Mr. Duvo; "they embody a vivifying principle, which I firmly believe will grow up into a life holy and heroic as ever was that of saint or martyr. Heroic, indeed! With no lamentation over her fate, no expression of the great effort she must be making,—for, with her tastes and sensibilities, what martyrdom could equal the torture of such a life?—she resolves in the silence of her soul, and walks forward with gentle, it may be with trembling steps; yet ever forward, no step retreating, to her doom. It reminds me of something I have read, or heard read, from the Bible: 'Not in the tempest or the earthquake, but in the still small voice.' My power might seem, in comparison with hers, as the tempest or the earthquake to the still small voice; but she does her work, hard as it is, while I—— What a coward you are, John Devereux! You, who have prided yourself on your courage and your manliness—what a coward you are! You dare not look your work steadfastly in the face, and say, with devout spirit, 'I see it, and, with God's help, it shall be done!' Nor, with manhood strong, brave, though undevout, say, 'I see it, but I will not do it!' No, you dare not look at it! For shame! This girl should cry shame upon you."

But, even while he was thus reproaching himself, there was an under-current of thought, on which dissevered fragments of his life were floating; and out of them, as they drifted together, was rising the goodly vision of his home, with all its beauties of field and park, its stately yet untenanted halls, its treasures of fruit and flowers, its game, which none were permitted to enjoy, and the last and most important feature in the picture, his masterless people, who, like sheep under the care of a hireling shepherd, had none to lift them over the rough places in their path, or to call

them back when, in their heedlessness, they were straying near dangerous steeps or filthy bogs. There started vividly to sight, on the very foreground of memory, a young lad who had been his favorite attendant and frequent playmate in boyhood; and, with a pang which astonished him by its keenness, he thought of him as wearing the garb of a culprit, and toiling in the distant wilds of Australia. This was no new knowledge to him, and yet it awakened new feelings. To the judgment of another against himself he would have answered, boldly, that all this was none of his business; that he had placed an incumbent in the rectory who was bound to take care of the spiritual good of his people; but against his own heart he could enter no such plea, or, if he did, it only roused the deeper question: Had he been sufficiently careful in his choice of one to whom the highest interests of those residing on his estate were to be committed — one who was to supply his lack of service toward them? Before he returned to the house, that evening, he had looked his work in the face, if he had not resolved to do it. The moon was looking down, through ragged clouds, upon an unquiet sea, when he did return; and, as he approached the cabin, he heard the same sweet voice which had roused all these reflections in his mind, reading. Treading gently, he came and stood, as he had done that first evening, on the threshold. The evening was chill, and the door was partly closed; but he could see the graceful bended head, and, as he listened, the solemn words seemed to fall, not on his ear only, but on his heart: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave whither thou goest." He ascended the stairs to his own apartment, without entering the cabin. His resolution was formed.

Once or twice a week Mr. Duvo was accustomed to send his groom to Squam for letters; and Violet, having requested Captain Ross to direct to her at that post-town, received her

letters in the same way. One morning, when she had been about six weeks on the beach, she was putting the finishing touches, under Mr. Duvo's direction, to her copy of one of the sketches from his portfolio, when the letters were brought in. There were several for Mr. Duvo, and only one for her.

"It is from dear Papa Ross!" she exclaimed, wishing very much to kiss the paper which his hand had touched, but restraining the inclination, lest Mr. Duvo should think her silly. "And he is in New York," she added, a moment after, as she glanced at the date.

She read but a few lines, when, starting from her seat, with a quick, eager movement, she hastened towards the stairs. She had scarcely begun the descent, when Mr. Duvo's voice, sounding oddly, she thought, cried, "Miss Van Dyke! one word, if you please!"

She looked back smilingly, to say, "In one moment, Mr. Duvo. I must see my mother. Papa Ross has come to New York, and writes for me to join him there."

She hastened on, and he was alone.

"She is going!" he cried, rising as if to follow her, his own letters falling on the floor unnoticed in the movement. He advanced towards the stairs; but, arresting himself before he reached them, turned to the window, murmuring "Better so, better so!"

He was still standing when he heard her springing up the stairs, and, with strange inconsistency, endeavoring to avoid her whom he had so lately been on the point of following, he hastened to his own room, and, reaching the lower deck by other stairs, was soon out upon the beach. Violet looked around for him as she entered the saloon where she had left him standing, but found only his letters on the floor.

She picked them up, saying to herself, as she did so, "I hope he has not heard any bad news; it must have been something important that made him forget these. I must put them where they will attract his eye when he comes in."

In doing this, she did more — she placed them where they attracted her own eye. She gave them a slight glance, then a more earnest observation; then examined each letter separately, as if suspecting some mistake in one; at last, putting them down, she repeated, softly, "Devereux — Duvo — this is strange!"

And all day, while packing her trunks, or finishing the little things she had undertaken to accomplish with her needle for Katy, or adding the last rows to a muffler she was netting for Dick, these words, "Devereux — Duvo — how strange!" were passing through Violet's mind.

Dinner-time came, but not Mr. Duvo, much to the annoyance of Katy, who declared, "People never does come when you wants 'em! Yer I 've gone and got the chowder, wot Mr. Duvo said he wanted, and there 's no Mr. Duvo to eat it."

An hour or two after dinner, as Violet was in "the drawing-room," gathering together the books, pencils, and scraps of paper, that lay scattered around, she heard his step ascending the stairs. The letters were before her, and, with a little trepidation, she put her hand upon them, and awaited the coming of their owner. He entered. His face was flushed with exercise, and there was an expression about it of unusual gravity, almost of sadness.

He looked around him for a moment, and then said, addressing Violet, "I left some letters here this morning, I believe."

"Yes, here they are, Mr. Devereux," she replied, with a little emphasis on the name, though there was a slight trembling both in her heart and voice. He looked earnestly at her, as if to ascertain her meaning, and then answered, quietly, "You are right: my name is Devereux."

He stood a moment longer, as if waiting for some further observation from her; but, as she did not speak, he turned, and, with his letters in his hand, proceeded towards the door. He had not reached it, however, when some coun-

ter influence sent him back to her. She had seated herself near the window, towards which her face was turned; but there was something in her air, something in the very fall of her arms to the lap on which her white hands lay folded, which told that her thoughts were not on the scene before her.

He drew near her, and, leaning against the window, said, "I cannot abide to have you think, even for an hour, that I have planned a deception, or suffered you to call me by a false name, for any unworthy purpose. I might say simply that I had not announced myself; but this would be disingenuous, for, in not correcting the mistake, I endorsed it. Can you spare me a few minutes, and will you listen to my exculpation?"

He spoke now with a smile; for her face was turned to him, and its expression had said, "With pleasure," before her lips uttered the words.

"May I begin at the beginning, and tell you a long story about myself?"

"If it will not trouble you too much."

"The trouble will be all yours, I am afraid. You mentioned that Captain Ross had resided for some years in England. Have you ever heard anything respecting his life there?"

"Not from him. Mrs. Wild, who was Edward's nurse, has spoken to me of it, but only when I was a child. I have not been willing since to hear from another what Papa Ross did not choose to tell me himself."

"You were quite right; but I have nothing to say that you need hesitate to hear — nothing of Captain Ross that was not known to the world. You are aware that he married in England?"

"Yes."

"Mrs. Ross was a distant relative of my mother. Almost in my babyhood I was accustomed to meet her at the house of one related to us both; and her gentleness and beauty

won my heart. Do not smile at the expression; for I really think there is no love at once so fervent and so pure, so worthy of the worthiest woman, as that which a very young boy sometimes feels for a girl somewhat older than himself. Neither was it with me an evanescent feeling. When I was ten years old, and my cousin Violet Arden seventeen, I still loved her; and it was at my request that my mother, when Colonel Arden was sent to the Peninsula with his regiment, offered her the protection of her home. There she was for a few happy months my inseparable companion. I even persuaded her to study Latin and Greek with my tutor; to tell the truth, I believe she preferred being pestered with a tiresome boy and his pedantic tutor, to the society at Oakdale Priory, which was too gay to harmonize with her spirits, depressed by anxiety for her father. But I am lingering on what is of little interest to you."

"You mistake. Everything respecting Mrs. Ross is of the greatest interest to me. I am so glad to have met one who knew her! You must allow me to introduce you to Papa Ross and Edward: they will both be delighted to meet you."

There was an incredulous smile upon his face as he answered, "Not Captain Ross, I fear."

A quick flush rose to Violet's cheek, and she would have spoken; but, without appearing to notice it, he proceeded.

"Colonel Arden died, and Captain Ross brought to England, or, at least, to his daughter, the sad intelligence. I have said that the society at the Priory was gay; it was too gay for such a time — I mean — I —" Mr. Devereux paused in evident embarrassment, but almost immediately resumed, "I could not blame my cousin, however I might grieve at her decision, when she withdrew to the house of our good old rector and his wife, who had always been very kind to her. Captain Ross soon became her declared suitor; and, when the year of mourning for her father was over, she married him. It would perhaps move your mirth,"

he said, while his face flushed, and there was a flash of angry feeling from his eyes, — "it would perhaps move your mirth, as it did that of my cousin's successful suitor at the time, should I tell you what suffering these events cost me. Yet believe me, it is no subject for jest, when any one — ay, even a child — finds all its little wealth of love, the full treasure of its being, its all, flung back to it as a worthless thing, even though the pang be not aggravated by that scoffing raillery to whose keen edge a man may oppose the armor of self-respect, but which cuts to the very core of a child's defenceless heart."

"And could Mrs. Ross be so cruel?" exclaimed Violet.

"She! She was gentle and tender as an angel. She was always kind when we met; but she could not save me the pain of seeing that I, that all the world, was nothing to her when Captain Ross was at her side; and he — but I beg your pardon — I have forgotten myself. I only intended to give my reasons for believing that he would not be particularly well pleased to know that I was in America. I did not mean to blame him. He thought he had, perhaps he had, good cause of complaint against — against some of the family at the Priory. It was quite natural that he should endeavor to withdraw my cousin from us."

"I would rather hear about yourself, about your name," said Violet, softly, and a little sadly; for she was sorry to hear Captain Ross blamed, and scarcely less sorry to find that he and Mr. Devereux were not likely to be friends.

"The name at first given you as mine was simply a mistake made by another." He would not say by whom, lest it should mortify Violet. "I did not correct it immediately, because it seemed to me a matter of no importance by what name you called the chance acquaintance of a day; nor do I think I was wrong in this, but —" He interrupted himself, moved restlessly across the room, returned to the window, and commenced with a subject apparently very

different. "Are you aware of your remarkable likeness to Mrs. Ross?"

"I know that Papa Ross thought me very like her. To this, indeed, I owe his affection, and all the happiness it has brought me."

"It is a likeness which could not escape the observation of any one who had seen her. You will not wonder, after all I have told you, that the report of this likeness made by your mother should have awakened in me not only a wish, but a determination, to see you. This will account for the long stay at the beach, which puzzled your good Wild so much. At first I only meant to see you; when I decided to do more — to make your acquaintance, if you would permit me; to learn whether that wonderful likeness extended to the mind and heart. I ought to have told you my true name and position. I persuaded myself, however, that, having once suffered the error to pass unnoticed, it was too late to correct it. Perhaps I was influenced by the fear that the name of Devereux was known, and not very favorably known, to you through Captain Ross. Perhaps — but, whatever were the cause, I was wrong. Can you forgive me?"

"I am afraid," said Violet, with an ingenuous blush, "that it is I who should ask your forgiveness. I had no right to make any remark on the name which I had seen only by an accident."

"You do yourself injustice," he exclaimed, warmly. "It was the greatest possible kindness to me to give me an opportunity of explaining that, which, unexplained, must have left a doubt most prejudicial to me upon your mind."

On the table near Violet were the drawings which she had been collecting for Mrs. Wild to pack. She drew them towards her, and, separating one from the rest, said, "This is Oakdale Priory, is it not, Mr. Devereux?"

"It is — and this," he added, selecting another, "is the old church at which Capt. Ross was married. But now

let me know something of yourself. When are you going away?"

"To-morrow. Papa Ross is waiting for me in New York."

"And may I ask how you go?"

Violet laughed. "I am afraid," she said, "that Mrs. Wild will be terribly shocked at such an undignified conveyance, but I can hear of nothing but a wagon, in which our trunks — our divans, I mean — will serve us for seats."

"I think I can do better for you than that. There is, in the little fishing-village at the head of the beach, one carriage to be hired; it is possible there may be others, but of one I am sure, for I came here in it. It is a little affair, intended for one horse, which they call a Rockaway, I suppose from the watering-place where they were first used."

"Yes; I have seen a Rockaway."

"I forgot you were not a stranger, like myself, but to the '*manner* born.' The important thing, however, is, that we can get this by sending to Manasquam; and as one of my horses is accustomed to harness, I can drive you and Mrs. Wild over to Shrewsbury. If you permit me, I will make arrangements for it immediately."

"I thank you — you are very kind," said Violet, with some hesitation of manner; "but" —

"Where is the but?" he asked, with a smile; "I do not see it."

"You would feel it, I am afraid, — or your horses would. It is a long drive, especially if you design to return the same day."

"Return! I shall not return here at all! I am going to New York with you; at least, I mean in the same boat. Was this your only objection, and have I now your permission to send to Manasquam for the carriage?"

"If it is not troubling you too much, Mrs. Wild will be everlastingly obliged to you," said Violet, playfully.

The next morning Katy gave the travellers a cup of coffee,

by candle-light, and the morning-star was still faintly perceptible in the brightening east when they went out upon the beach. The cart which was to carry their trunks was there, drawn by a stout farm-horse, and driven by a sturdy boy of sixteen; but the carriage had not yet come.

"See here, Mr. Duvo, how's that 'ere carriage ever, under the sun an' arth, to git back home to Manasquam, if you're all a goin'?" asked Katy, suddenly.

"My man will arrange all that, and follow with his horses to-morrow," said Mr. Devereux.

"Well, you don't do things small, nohow; an' I'm right sorry you be all a goin'. Somehow, I think it 'ill be dreadful lonesome here when you're all gone; an', Mary, Dick an' me was a sayin' the cap'in might let you come a little while in the winter, an' you could bring some more o' them books, and read for us in the long evenings, when there was n't no business a doin', an' it would be right nice."

Violet turned pale as death.

"What you say 'bout it?" demanded Katy.

"I will tell Papa Ross," she faltered forth.

Katy was not altogether satisfied with the response, and rejoined, "Well, you better; and you can tell him, too, there was n't no papers signed for you, so he better do wot we ax, quiet."

"You need not send that message to him, mother," said Violet, now crimson with shame. "I am your child, and bound to come to you whenever you demand it. When shall it be?"

"Well, I guess 'bout Christmas 'ill be a good time."

"Remarkably good," answered Mr. Devereux, quickly, "if your object be to kill Miss Van Dyke! Don't you see that, while you find this fresh morning breeze delightful, she can hardly bear it, with all her wrappings? She would never live out a winter here."

"Well, I'm sure I don't want to do her no harm; nor

Dick, neither, for that matter. So you need n't say nothin' till we send for you."

Mr. Devereux was beginning to feel a little anxiety about the carriage, when it appeared, approaching rapidly. It soon swept up beside them.

If Mr. Devereux's horse had ever been accustomed to harness, he seemed to have forgotten the custom, showing such evident uneasiness that Mrs. Wild, after putting her foot upon the step of the little carriage in which Violet was already seated, drew it back.

"The lady better make haste, sir," said the groom, who stood at the horse's head; "he 's very onrestless when he 's a startin'."

"O! Miss Violet, you 'd better get out; he 's very vicious!" cried Mrs. Wild, drawing further away.

"There 's no danger, Mrs. Wild," said Violet. "I am not afraid; but, if you are —"

"Suppose you take the wagon," suggested Mr. Devereux, quickly.

"Thank you, sir; I think I will. And I can make Miss Violet quite comfortable with these shawls." But before Mrs. Wild's sentence was concluded, Mr. Devereux was on his seat, the groom had stepped aside, and the horse was off at a rate of speed which seemed to the good matron to justify all her fears. The reins, however, were in hands both strong and skilful. The horse soon recognized his master, and grew quiet under his firm yet gentle guidance; and then Mr. Devereux seemed to give his whole attention to his companion, chasing away every sad thought by the charm of his conversation, which revealed a mind richly stored with the treasures to be won from books, as well as with the varied aspects of nature and of man. They were at Shrewsbury nearly an hour before Mrs. Wild joined them, looking a little dignified, at first, at having been left to the wagon, but soon soothed into good humor by Violet's regrets and Mr. Devereux's attentions.

On board the steamboat his powers were again exerted for Violet's entertainment; and so successfully, that when she saw before her a forest of masts and a few tall spires, shooting above them towards the sky, she asked, "What city is that?" and found it hard to believe that it was New York. From that time, however, even Mr. Devereux could not win her attention. Thoughts of another filled her heart — of the kind and tender father whom she was so soon to meet. Mr. Devereux had said he did not wish Capt. Ross to know that he was in America; but could she have a secret from him? Mr. Devereux perceived that her eyes no longer met his with their full, clear, intelligent interest; there was a troubled, varying expression in them. Sometimes she turned them suddenly upon him, as if about to speak, then withdrew them as suddenly without a word. He drew nearer to her, and, lowering his voice so that his words could not reach the ear of Mrs. Wild, he said, "You do not seem quite at your ease. May I venture to ask what disturbs you?"

"Mr. Devereux, Papa Ross will probably meet me at the boat. I never had a secret from him in my life."

"And you are afraid that I wish to make you a partner to my fraud? Pray, present me to Capt. Ross when we meet. If he be not at the boat, I shall ask your permission to accompany you to him."

"O, thank you! I am so glad!" and the trouble vanished from her eyes.

The boat, as it happened, arrived nearly an hour earlier than usual. Capt. Ross was not in waiting; they found him at the hotel to which he had directed Violet. For a moment she forgot everything else, as she heard his gentle "My child!" and felt herself resting once more in his strong arms. Her first thought, as she raised herself from his embrace, was of Mr. Devereux. She looked around for him, and saw that he had followed her to the door of the

room in which she had met Captain Ross, but had not entered.

"Papa Ross," said Violet, leading him towards the door, as she spoke, "I have an old acquaintance from England, here, to introduce to you — Mr. Devereux."

The gentlemen were standing face to face when she pronounced the word. Violet felt a sudden spasm in the arm on which she leaned, and saw that the pale face of Capt. Ross grew visibly paler; but these were the only signs of unusual emotion about him, and they passed away so quickly that she hoped none else had perceived them. Mr. Devereux was courteously welcomed; and, having accepted an invitation from Capt. Ross to take tea with them, he was soon in the full flow of talk with his host, on the objects of his visit to America, his experiences in the New World, and his plans of travel; but not a word of that past which lay in the heart of each, coiled like a serpent, ready to strike.

CHAPTER VII.

"If I could temporize with my affection,
Or brew it to a weak and colder palate,
The like allayment could I give my grief."

"This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath,
May prove a beauteous flower when next we meet."
SHAKSPEARE.

CAPT. Ross was not a demonstrative person; especially was he reserved in the expression of feeling in the presence of strangers; yet there was an unconscious softening in his voice when he named Violet, a gentleness in his usually stern eyes when they rested on her, which revealed to Mr. Devereux his love for his adopted child more fully than any words could have done. Miss Briôt, too, welcomed her beloved pupil with the warmest affection, lavishing upon her all the epithets of endearment furnished by both her English and French vocabularies. Mr. Devereux himself was received by the one with dignified courtesy, by the other with the most flattering *empressement* — to borrow a word from her own tongue. Capt. Ross would not fail, for his own sake, in any hospitalities to one from England who could present the claim on him of former acquaintanceship, and even of some distant family connection. Miss Briôt liked the attendance of such a distinguished-looking stranger; and Mr. Devereux smiled at the motives he so clearly saw, caring little for the consideration in which he was held by either, except in so far as that might influence his facilities of intercourse with the young girl who had already excited his interest in no ordinary degree, and for whom his admiration increased as he contrasted the tenderness and refinement surrounding her in her present home with the coarseness and hardness of that to which, with such unpre-

tending simplicity, such unconscious heroism, she had gone at the call of duty. It was this moral beauty, far more than any external loveliness, with whatever remembrances associated, which now kept him lingering in her society. And yet he did not call the sentiment with which he regarded her love. It was his theory that love would overleap all obstacles for the attainment of its object; but between Violet and himself he saw a barrier, which, though at some moments it dwindled into insignificance, seemed generally heaven high. Could the race which had been illustrious ere yet his Norman ancestors had set foot in Britain, unite with the abject and degraded dwellers on the beach? This was the thought which often brought him back in the morning, determined to check, by a calm friendliness and somewhat distant courtesy, the imaginations which his conscience told him the warmer demonstrations of the evening might have excited. It might have been amusing to a spectator to see how again and again these resolutions melted away in presence of the frank simplicity and natural gayety of heart of the unconscious girl, who saw in him a kind friend, and nothing more. Perhaps this perfect unconsciousness on her part helped to keep Capt. Ross at ease, and unsuspicious respecting that which, as events afterwards proved, he would have little liked to see.

And thus, each of the party, except Violet herself, showing but the surface of their true selves, things passed pleasantly enough, till one unlucky morning, when Mr. Devereux called for Capt. Ross, who had promised to accompany him on a visit to Governor's Island. A packet was to sail for England that day. Her mails would close in an hour, and Capt. Ross looked up from the letter he was writing, to say, "Good-morning, Mr. Devereux. Excuse me for half an hour; this letter must be finished in that time."

"I will call again," said Mr. Devereux.

"No — do not go away; you will find the ladies in the next room; they will entertain you."

Mr. Devereux had come determined not to see Violet; — at least, not to ask for her. He now glanced through the half-open door, and saw the graceful outline of her form as she sat at a window looking into Broadway. A moment's hesitation, and, crossing the room in which Capt. Ross sat, he entered the other. Violet turned round, and her face lighted up with pleasure as she received and returned his morning salutations. Throwing himself into a lounging-chair near her, he said, with a smile, "Captain Ross sent me here to be entertained; so, pray begin."

"Begin with what?" asked Violet.

"With your entertainment. Capt. Ross said the ladies would entertain me."

"Miss Briôt says the best way to entertain people is to set them talking, and then listen with interest yourself."

"Very good; set me talking, then."

"I am afraid of exhausting your powers, you look so languid," Violet answered, playfully.

"Languid! is that a polite word for lazy? I believe I am becoming lazy."

"How will that agree with a journey *à cheval* through the Southern and Western States?" asked Violet.

"Not well, and so I have almost decided to relinquish the journey," Mr. Devereux answered.

"Is it possible? O! I am so sorry!" she exclaimed, with girlish thoughtlessness; then, checking herself, added, with a heightened color, "Pray, excuse me, Mr. Devereux, — I was so glad that you were going to judge of us in America for yourself! I am so glad of everything which promises to do away the misunderstandings between the English and ourselves! But I had no right to express any regret in relation to your movements; you doubtless have good reasons for them."

"Very good, I think; and I flatter myself you would feel no regret at the change, if you knew what I had substituted for my journey."

He paused, and looked at her with a smile that seemed to invite inquiry; but Violet was just schooling herself into consideration, and hesitated to ask what yet she wished to know.

"You will not ask me what that is!" said he.

"And yet, I should be very glad to know," replied Violet, once more at her ease.

A graver expression came over his hitherto playful countenance, as he answered, "It is to go home, and begin to 'do the work which God appointed for me.'"

Violet recognized her own words, once used to him, and again her cheeks flushed with shame, as she said, "I fear you are laughing at me, Mr. Devereux!"

"Indeed, I am not," was the warm response. "I am thanking you, from my inmost soul, for having aroused me to the perception of a duty too long overlooked. I hope mine is not a more than ordinarily selfish nature; and yet, as, under the impression of those words,— words to which your own example gave their wonderful power,—I have looked over my life, I can find no act dictated by anything but my own pleasure."

He was silent, but Violet was too much abashed at finding such influence attributed to her to speak, and he resumed: "My people will, I hope, have as much cause to thank you as I have. I am going to live among them, to see their wants for myself, and to do all I can for their happiness and improvement. I should like to talk over my plans with you. You know I am quite a novice in this matter, and shall want advice."

"You must talk over your plans with Papa Ross, or with good Mr. Merton, or some one with an older and wiser head than mine."

"You have just the wisdom I want in my adviser. Of prudence, worldly wisdom, I have enough; I want the help of your quick sympathies, your kindly character. If I might hope that you would one day see the results of

your own suggestions — and I will hope it, may I not?" His voice softened into tenderness; the eyes that were bent upon her grew radiant with a warmer feeling than he had yet expressed. Hers sank beneath them. A new sensation awoke in her heart, and sent the blood, in a quick, burning blush, to her pure face. At that moment her race and his own were forgotten; nothing was remembered but herself, her loveliness, her excellence. His hand was outstretched to clasp hers, when a cold, constrained voice at his side uttered, "Mr. Devereux, I am ready to attend you."

Violet and Mr. Devereux both started as if they had been detected in some wrong-doing. Violet did not raise her eyes; but Mr. Devereux turned, to see Capt. Ross, somewhat paler, somewhat graver, perhaps, than usual, yet with undiminished courtesy, waiting, hat in hand, to attend him. Lifting his hat from the floor, he arose and followed his host silently from the room.

Violet was alone, yet she did not stir. Still seated by the window where Mr. Devereux had found her, the shifting crowds of Broadway passed before her eyes, but made no impression on her mind. Her hands lay folded on her lap, there was a soft smile upon her lips, and a dreamy expression in her eyes. We will leave her to a revery pure and simple as herself — a revery which, though she would have started, like a frightened fawn, from the very thought of unveiling to another, she need not have blushed to have angels read, since its chief charm lay in a noble life-work, that had derived its first spring from her.

Leaving her, we will follow Capt. Ross and Mr. Devereux as they proceeded, in almost unbroken silence, down Broadway, each occupied with his own thoughts, which, it may be said *en passant*, revolved about the same centre. At the Battery, which was not very distant from the hotel, they were to take a boat for that little island in the harbor of New York, whose green slopes have been transformed

into ramparts bristling with cannon. Neither boat nor boatman was to be seen on their arrival, and they had stood for some minutes leaning over the parapet which runs along the Battery on the west and south, and looking over the quiet waters of the lovely bay, when Capt. Ross said, "Did I understand aright the few words I caught of your conversation with Miss Van Dyke, this morning, Mr. Devereux? Are you intending to return immediately to England?"

"I had almost decided to do so last night—but now—"

He paused, and Capt. Ross resumed, quickly, "May I ask what has occurred to—pardon me—I will confine myself to what concerns me. Has Miss Van Dyke said anything to induce you to change your purpose?"

"Said? O, no! she has not *said* anything."

"Has she *done* anything? Is she in any way connected with the change in your decision?"

"I can hardly say it is *changed*, though it is certainly shaken."

By the kindling of his eyes, by the faint flush which rose to his brow, Capt. Ross showed the impatience with which he listened. Facing round towards his companion, with whom he had hitherto stood side by side, he spoke in a tone that effectually roused him from the revery in which he had been plunged, even while giving his very unsatisfactory answers.

"I must ask you to explain yourself more fully, Mr. Devereux," said Capt. Ross. "The relation in which I stand to Miss Van Dyke makes it my duty to inquire your meaning, so far as she is concerned. Further, I have, of course, neither the wish nor the right to ask anything respecting your purposes."

Raising himself from his leaning posture, and confronting Capt. Ross with an eye as firm though less fiery than his own, Mr. Devereux answered, "You have taken me somewhat by surprise, Captain Ross. You are asking for my

decision on subjects on which my thoughts still have failed to arrive at any certain conclusion."

"I ask only for what concerns Miss Van Dyke, sir."

Capt. Ross spoke somewhat haughtily, and it was not altogether without irritation that Mr. Devereux replied: "I am perfectly willing, sir, that you should know every feeling of mine which bears the slightest reference to Miss Van Dyke. I have made no effort to disguise them; indeed, I have only waited to understand myself more fully, to bring some order out of the chaos of wishes and hesitations in my mind, before I should ask you to listen to them all."

"Perhaps, sir, it may be better for all parties that accident has disclosed them to me in their present state. It may turn the wavering balance of your mind, and prevent your forming wishes that could only end in disappointment, if I tell you that I have already designs for Miss Van Dyke which must prevent her accepting the honor which, if I understand you correctly, you think it possible you may, at some future day, be induced to offer her."

"I see you are offended, Captain Ross, by my mention of hesitations; and yet ——"

"Pardon me for interrupting you! It is to assure you that nothing you said gave me so much pleasure as that word. It rendered it easy for me to make the communication I have done."

"If that ease proceeded from your belief that you inflicted no pain — But that is of little importance; I do not ask for pity. There is one thing I do desire, one thing to which I have perhaps some claim, and that is frankness."

"The *claim* might, perhaps, be disputed; but we will waive that. I am not conscious of having failed in frankness. I think I have said all that can be of interest to you in the affair. If not, Mr. Devereux, I am willing to answer any reasonable question from you."

"Thank you for the concession. It surely will not appear unreasonable to you that I desire to know whether you

have any objection to me personally as a suitor to Miss Van Dyke."

"Certainly not, Mr. Devereux. I thought my words would have rendered such a question unnecessary. Your position, fortune, and, so far as I am acquainted with it, your character, are all, and more than all, I could desire for Miss Van Dyke. I mentioned that I had other designs for her."

"And those she sanctions?"

"They have not yet been submitted to her, but I have little or no reason to doubt that she will sanction them,—if she be guarded in future, as she has hitherto been, from associations likely to lead to any other attachment."

Capt. Ross was silent, but Mr. Devereux did not reply. He had resumed his leaning posture, and there was an expression in his face which touched some gentler feeling in the heart of Captain Ross. His tone was kind as he resumed, "I am sorry if I have given you pain, Mr. Devereux; but you will, I think, readily acknowledge that I may, without any selfish exaggeration, ask that the inclinations, which you still hesitated to name as wishes, should yield to desires which for twelve years have never wavered. You have a bright life before you, Mr. Devereux; but for this one hope, the brightness of mine would all lie in the past."

"And you intend to marry Miss Van Dyke yourself?"

Mr. Devereux strove to speak calmly, but in vain,—his voice betrayed his agitation.

"I am neither a fool nor a madman, Mr. Devereux," exclaimed Capt. Ross, while an angry flash again shot from his eyes. "I thought I had already told you it was my wish that my son should marry Miss Van Dyke."

"Your son! And does he wish it?"

"He is now abroad, and has not seen Miss Van Dyke since they were both children; but he will be at home in the spring, and can you doubt that he will wish it?"

"And for this uncertain contingency you ask me to relinquish hopes whose strength I am just beginning ——"

"Mr. Devereux, listen to me! You know that I have been to Miss Van Dyke as a father. From what you know of her character, do you believe that she could be induced to enter into any engagement without my sanction?"

The vivacity which renewed hope had given to Mr. Devereux's face died out, and his head, which had been lifted in remonstrance, sank again in gloomy despondency.

"I am answered," said Capt. Ross. "I see you estimate her properly, and you perceive that what I ask as a favor I am in a position to enforce. And now, when I pledge myself to you, by all that is most sacred to man, never to consent to her marriage with another, while there is the slightest reason to hope that my desire of a union between Edward and herself may be fulfilled, you will see that, though you may trouble the serenity of her life, your success can only be built upon my failure."

"Capt. Ross, the power is in your hands, and you are determined, I see, to use it for selfish ends. I will not trouble her gentle spirit by an appeal to her. Rather will I try to attain to some of that wisdom I have heard from her pure lips, and commit my cause to Him that judgeth righteously, trusting that He will bring my desires to pass." And, quite forgetful of Governor's Island and his engagement, Mr. Devereux turned away; and, having crossed the Battery to its eastern gate, plunged into those crowded streets where Mammon plies his busiest trade, and crowds are ever hurrying to lay their costly sacrifices of peace and domestic joys, of health, and reason, and life, and too often, sad to say, of their hopes of heaven, on his altar. Among these crowds there was less danger of his meeting a chance acquaintance than in Broadway. Here, jostled at every turn by men absorbed in the calculation of their losses or their gains, — in the gay anticipations of success, or the fixed, despairing gaze on apprehended ruin, — he would be

as much alone as if shut in by the four walls of his room; yet he would have free air and space for movement. And now, while he threaded streets of whose very names he knew nothing, the mind, having no perception of the present objects flitting before his eyes, was in his distant home, walking once more beneath "ancestral oaks," or sitting in long silent halls, echoing again, to the ear of fancy, with the cheerful hum of life; but, wherever moving, still with a companion by his side, whose delight would give a new spring to his own, and from whose generous sympathies his should catch the sacred glow of charity. And ever, while these visions, pure and beautiful, were before him, — while the good to be done, and the pleasure to be enjoyed, spread their alluring pictures, — they were accompanied by the sad thought that they were for him but "airy nothings," that, "like the baseless fabric of a vision, should leave not a wrack behind." If the saddest of all thoughts be the thought of happiness that *has been*, the next saddest, surely, is that of happiness which *can never be*. By such sadness, often, we learn to know the strength of our desires. Where were the hesitations now by whose mention Mr. Devereux had offended Capt. Ross, only an hour since? He despised himself when he remembered them. He was ready to feel, with Capt. Ross, that the sentiment which admitted them was too weak to be a worthy offering to its object. And yet those hesitations were natural and reasonable; and, had he stood where he supposed himself yesterday to stand, with the object of his wishes just within his grasp, they would doubtless have sprung up again to check his bounding joy, — to force him to pause, to deliberate; and, even should he attain his desires, they would mingle with his cup of happiness no small portion of earthly imperfection. But human wishes, unlike the objects of vision, increase as they recede; and now, beside his gigantic wishes, his hesitations had dwindled into almost invisible motes.

John Devereux, born to a large landed estate, and a name

which needed no title to ennoble it, might have been regarded as one of fortune's favorites; and yet his life had been a succession of disappointments. His sorrow in his boyhood, from the estrangement of Mrs. Ross, we have heard from himself. His intimacy with her had awakened in his heart feelings which found no response in his frivolous mother, and the worldly set which she drew around her. What he had learned from Mrs. Ross, he never forgot. Retaining her in his memory as the standard of all that was "pure and lovely and of good report," he could not but regard them and their maxims as falling far below it. One valuable lesson he early learned from this contest of feeling, — the lesson of self-command. He imitated, perhaps he outdid, — for copyists are apt to do so, — their coldness and *persiflage*; but, deep beneath it all, beat a heart which still enshrined the ideal that she had consecrated. At twenty, he had the character of being rather odd, — a little *brusque*, at times, — yet very charming; the last phrase meaning that he was lighter and more worldly, if possible, than those around him. About this time his mother died; and, as soon as he was of age, he had gone abroad, and had lived ever since a life of wandering and adventure. Thus freed from all the restraints of home and of society, well was it for him that the tree of healing, which had been early thrown into the well-spring of his life, retained its purifying power. Under its influence, the vices which allured many, disgusted him; and, though he lacked the simple, unquestioning faith, the spiritual perception, which comes from above, he had no sympathy with the scoffing infidel. He was no stranger to the Book of God, for he had read it with his cousin long ago: and there were times when her sweet face seemed yet to lean with his over its pages, and her tender voice to utter some of its favorite texts. He admired it, too, as a man of taste; though its poetry was to him that of "those old Hebrews," and its eloquence that "of Paul." For the rest, he was, according to the character of the person describing him, a

"strange, odd creature, yet perfectly charming when he pleased;" "a noble-hearted fellow, afraid of nothing, and always ready to do a good turn for a friend;" or a "wild, hare-brained young man, who left a fine estate, and a position of great influence, in England, to run about the world after every mad freak of his fancy,—now running the risk of being cut to pieces by Turkish sabres, for a set of marauders whom he dignified with the name of Greeks,—now roaming across the desert to—Heaven knows where; riding elephants, hunting tigers, and doing a thousand other things which no respectable, sensible person would ever dream of."

And to all these varied allegations John Devereux must have plead guilty. Wherever there was anything to be done, there he was, in aimless activity, striving to do it,—trying to find some vent for those powers which, unemployed, hung as a heavy weight upon his life; for happier is the fool than he who, having received God's richest gifts, lets them lie idle. He had left England at twenty-one, because he could not satisfy himself with the life of pleasure to which all the influences immediately surrounding him seemed drifting him on. In that land, whose achievements in arts and arms, great as these have been, have not been her greatest,—that land, whose noblest victories have been won under the banner of the Lord of Hosts,—there are those who brand as fanatical enthusiasts, or hypocritical Pharisees, all who profess to draw their motives of action from anything beyond the narrow circle of self. If young Devereux did not always agree with this judgment, there seemed little encouragement, little promise of life-guidance for him, in the example of men whom he might admire, but could not imitate. Between him and them there seemed a great gulf; and he knew not that it was by doing the "duty that lay nearest them," just such duties as his own position placed plainly before him, that they had bridged their way to their present position.

He had come to America, as he had gone elsewhere, in

search of adventure, of something to do, looking no further than the present, no higher than the earth. He would see Niagara; he would compare the red man of the forest with the Arab of the desert; he would hunt buffaloes on the prairies; perchance he might join some party of *voyageurs*, and penetrate at least within the outer circle of that mysterious North, where Nature, sitting in solemn grandeur on a throne of ice, defies man's puny efforts to unveil her mysteries; or, should he grow indolent, he might pass his winters among those island of the gulf, where the perfumes of spring and the luxuriance of summer ever fill the senses even to satiety.

An accidental mention, by some chance acquaintance at the hotel in New York, of Squan Beach, its lawless inhabitants, and its excellent fishing and shooting, had sent him there, as presenting one of the remarkable features of American social life, and offering him the amusement he best liked. He had been directed to Katy Van Dyke's, as the only place on the beach at which he could obtain a comfortable meal. The circumstances that detained him there beyond his first intention, and which brought him into association with Violet, are already known to the reader.

Her remarkable likeness to one whom he regarded as the truest friend of his life, and whom he held as the standard of all that was lovely and attractive in woman, could not but excite his interest; but it was, as we have said, the moral likeness he afterwards discovered that gave to that interest the glow and warmth of tenderness. In her the man saw clearly that which had escaped the boy in Violet Arden, namely, that inward principle from which flowed all that charmed him in the outer life. Often, when she knew it not, he listened to the Holy Scriptures as she read them, and to those simple tracts, many of which stand second to no writings but the inspired word of God, in their earnest appeals to conscience, and their distinct portraitures of truth. Then, just as he was beginning to look at his life in

the new light thus cast upon it, — to feel dissatisfied with the past, and to ask what the future should be, — a few simple words placed distinctly before him responsibilities so long disregarded. His work was not to seek, — it was there, allotted by the Master of all; and how had it been done? He resolved that the past should be redeemed. As he had said to Violet, he was impatient to begin the work; but, to his own surprise, he found that not the teachings only, but the gentle teacher, had become as a part of his life; and yet, when he thought of realizing his dreams, of making her such in truth, there were "hesitations."

It was hard to believe her of the same blood with Dick and Katy Van Dyke. But she called them father, mother; and that he should know that he stood thus connected with them, even though he could stifle the sense of duty which was so active in her, and bear her where these displeasing names would be never heard, unless an accusing conscience should sound them in the depths of their hearts, — even then, how could he bear the thought of such an alliance? — how justify it to the long line of honorable men who had transmitted their names unsullied to him, or to the posterity over whose hitherto untainted escutcheon he should have thrown this blot? Again and again the result of his night's meditations had been a determination to return to England and begin his work, and to remember her who had aroused him to it only with the reverence due to a saint or a martyr; but the morning came, — he saw her again, so simple, so gentle, with all a child's purity and guilelessness, yet with a woman's sweet reserve, and a thousand pretty gracefulnesses which belonged to herself alone, and he felt that he could not relinquish the hope of making her his. It may be asked, was there no thought of *her* happiness, in these varying decisions? We answer, — none; for he believed that as yet her heart had never been awakened to any warmer emotion than grateful regard for one who had taken an interest in her happiness, and who

had been able to ward off from her some annoyances. On this last morning, indeed, he had hoped, for a moment, that it was the first dawning consciousness of a new and strange emotion which flushed her cheeks, and caused her eyes to veil themselves so quickly by their drooping lids. Now, however, he was ready to call himself a coxcomb for having entertained such an idea.

"She is one," he said, in his thoughts, "conscious of her worth, who will not unwooed be won. And have I not wooed her? Careful as I have deemed myself, can I, indeed, have hidden my heart so completely from her? Ah, could I believe that I had awakened one emotion of love in that young, pure heart, I should have no difficulty in deciding on my course. I would never leave her till she was mine, or till the hope of winning her was wholly lost."

How vain is any effort of pen or pencil to portray the storm of passion, or to convey any true impression of the power by which man says to the warring elements of his spiritual being "Be still!" and they obey him.

Mr. Devereux's were the passions not of a boy, quickly kindled and as quickly exhausted; they were those of a man, — of a man who had not dissipated his heart on light and frivolous *liaisons*. Yielding slowly to the influence that would arouse them, once thoroughly aroused, like Samson waking from his slumbers, they snapped all ordinary bonds asunder. The opposition of Capt. Ross had served but to make him understand himself; and, having arrived at this understanding, he never thought of relinquishing the pursuit of his object, — of saying to himself, this can never be attained; the very idea of seeking forgetfulness never occurred to him. Every thought, every energy, of his soul, was bent on one question, — how should he win Violet, and yet save her from the pain which he knew her grateful and affectionate heart would suffer from any rupture of those ties connecting her with Capt. Ross? Long was it before he could so master himself as to look with calm, discriminating

judgment upon all the elements of this question; and the shades of evening were closing around him ere he saw his course lying clearly before him. This attained, he was strong again — strong to do, strong to wait and to endure. Among the mists and clouds of uncertainty, he was feeble, the sport of every wind of passion; but, now he stood on solid ground, he had looked the worst in the face, and said, "I can bear it," and, like Antæus when he touched the earth, he felt new vigor.

For the first time, since he parted from Capt. Ross, he began to take note of surrounding objects. All was strange, — streets of low wooden shanties, with parti-colored rags stuffing the broken panes of glass; filthy streets, in whose mud and garbage wallowed swine which the most determined antagonist of Moses could not have denied to be unclean, and children to whom the same epithet might most truthfully have been applied. He would have called a carriage, but none was within sight. At the distance of only a few hundred feet from him gleamed the quiet waters of the East River. They looked invitingly; he would like to escape from the stench of these close and dirty streets, to their purer and fresher air. He was weary of walking, too, and, could he find a boat and boatman, who would take him round to the Battery or its neighborhood, he would like it well. He soon made his way to the wharf, from which several ragged boys were dropping their lines into the water with little success, as he judged from a few minutes' observation of their movements. Advancing to the group, which turned quickly from their unprofitable employment to give their attention to the stranger as he approached, he asked, "Who wants a silver dollar?"

There were as many candidates for the prize as there were hearers of the question; and each, vociferously declaring that he was the first who spoke for it, strove to push his companions aside, and make his way to this distributor of wealth, who seemed in some danger of sharing the fate

of those unlucky conjurers who have been torn in pieces by the spirits they had raised; but he held the glittering spell that ruled them far above their reach, exclaiming, "He shall have it that first brings a boat and boatman to row me round to the Battery."

Hither and thither scampered the sturdy boys. One only, the largest, most intelligent-looking, and most ragged of them all, stood still, kicking his bare feet against each other, and flinging in the air and adroitly catching again his crownless and almost brimless straw hat, with an inimitable air of nonchalance.

"Why do you not go, too? Do you not want a dollar?" asked Mr. Devereux.

"O, yis! but I wantst mo'" — with a leer, and an extra kick, which sent the dirt over Mr. Devereux's no longer shining boots.

"More!" cried Mr. Devereux, with some surprise.

"Yis — what 'ill ye gie ef I sculls you roun' myself?"

"Where will you get the boat?"

"That an't none o' yer business. I knows what I'm about; jist you tell me wot you 'll gie."

"Another dollar," was the short and satisfactory reply.

"That 'ill be two dollar? — hey?"

"Yes, two dollars; to be paid when you land me at the Battery."

"Well, 'come 'long, — that 'ill do;" and the young boatman, going to the further side of the wharf, began to descend it rapidly, using the projections of the logs of which the wharf was built as steps. Remembering a lesson impressed upon him by many of the adventures of his boyhood, "to look before he leaped," Mr. Devereux peered over the side before following his example. The tide was low, and there was a precipitous descent of some twelve or fourteen feet; but it was not this which caused him to start back so quickly; it was the green slime which clothed

the logs, and which had left visible tokens of themselves on the face, hands, and rags, of his boatman.

"Is there no other way of getting to the boat?" he called.

"I dunno none, 'cept it 's the steps t' other side, for the gals."

For once Mr. Devereux was willing to disown his manhood, and, ordering the boat rowed to the other side, he was just about to descend the "steps for the gals," when a whooping in the distance caught his ear, and, looking in the direction whence it came, he saw the whole troop of boys returning, at as rapid a pace, and with as confused outcries, as they had gone. As they drew nearer he could distinguish, "He 's a comin' !"—"He 's a comin' !"—"I called him !"—"No, he did n't !—'t was me called him !"—"No, 't was me !"—"You lie, 't was n't !"

Louder and louder grew the din. Fearful of being detained by them, Mr. Devereux waited only till they had approached near enough to permit him to fling a handful of pennies and small silver coin among them; then, as they scrabbled for it on the ground, or fought with each other for its possession, he threw himself down the steps and sprang into the boat, which his strong and active young boatman soon sent out into the stream. Fear, perhaps, lent strength to his arm; for scarcely had they left the wharf when a man appeared on it, who screamed out denunciations thick and heavy against him, as "one crate, pig tief—one rogue—one pad villain !" ordering him to "pring pack his poat," and promising that whenever he found him he would "peat him plack."

"Did you steal that man's boat, sirrah?" questioned Mr. Devereux.

"I only borrowed it; ef I was a gwine a boat-stealin', I would n't tek sich a mean old boat as this yere !" answered Hopeful, looking very contemptuously at the object in question.

"Row back to the wharf, sir!"

The boy looked back, but rowed, or rather sculled, with his two oars, according to the fashion of New York boatmen, steadily in the opposite direction.

"Do you hear me, sir?" cried Mr. Devereux, raising his voice to the tone of command, and elevating at the same time a rattan, which he carried in his hand in walking.

Dropping the oars into the boat, the boy doubled his fists and rubbed their knuckles into his eyes, until he had made them red, if not tearful, at the same time working his countenance into the most hideous contortions, and snivelling out, "Don't yer see he 's a gwine to lick me? An' he licks powerful, he does! — He 'll mash my head all to jelly; an' all becase I 's a poor boy, an' jist borrowed the boat to make a leetle money for my mammy, cos she 's a starvin', an' an't got a shift to her back, an'—"

He stopped abruptly, seeing that his passenger had seized the oars, and was propelling the boat towards the land with strokes vigorous, though not very skilful, as he was unaccustomed to using two oars at once.

Mr. Devereux caught the glance with which he peered out from his half-closed eyes upon him, and, scarcely able to suppress a laugh, asked if he had got through his crying, and was ready to row. Somewhat crestfallen at perceiving that his eloquent appeal had produced so little effect, he brought his lachrymals to an immediate close, and silently resumed the oars. A few pulls, and he rested on them to say, "Yer won't let him lick me — please, sir — I did n't mean to do no harm to the boat; I jist wanted to scull you, an' then I 'd ha' put it in the same place, and he would n't ha' knowed nothin', ef them had n't ha' blabbed! I 'll lick them, I will!"

"How can I prevent this man from whipping you as soon as I am gone?"

"He won't lick, if he says no; please, sir, make him say he won't!"

They were now within hearing of the wharf, and the man began to descend the steps, doubtless to put his threat in execution, while the boyish oarsman's late companions manifested the wildest delight, turning somersets, standing on their heads, and walking with the aid of their hands in that position to the very edge of the wharf, while they cried out, in the most joyous tones, "You 'll catch it!" "Lay it on thick!" "Yer a goner, Mike!" "Shall I rin for a docthor, Mike?" and other equally encouraging offers and assurances.

Mr. Devereux saw, by the countenance and actions of the owner of the boat, that there was really some reason for the boy's apprehensions of the choleric little Welshman; so, springing on shore himself, he bade him draw out into the stream. The command was promptly obeyed, the young boatman divining his intentions, and as quickly signalizing his triumph by a crow and a wave of his hat to his former companions, who ceased their antics that they might observe the scene passing between the Welshman and the stranger.

Enraged at the escape of the boy from immediate punishment, the former turned upon Mr. Devereux, who was nearly twice his size, making passes with his fists and dancing around him, as if seeking the place where he might plant his blows with most effect, crying, at the same time, "You pig tief, I preak your heat!—I preak your pones!"

Mr. Devereux only laughed at these demonstrations, finding it quite a sufficient defence to present his rattan at every point where his adversary seemed disposed to make an assault. In this way he thought soon to tire out his assailant; but the strength of the wiry little man seemed as inexhaustible as his passion, and both promised to last a great deal longer than Mr. Devereux's patience; so, watching his opportunity, he dropped his rattan, closed with his antagonist, and, by a slight exertion of strength, and a trick of wrestling learned in his school-boy days, laid him prostrate on the earth. Before he could rise, or recover

from the bewilderment of this unexpected result, Mr. Devereux hastened to make him understand his object.

"I do not want to hurt you," he said, "or to injure your boat. I only want to hire it of you to go round to the Battery. You have only to name your price, and I will pay you at once."

"Who pring my poat pack?" asked the Welshman, more quietly, yet still a little sulkily.

"The boy who is now in the boat."

"Him tief! — him pig tief! — I will not trust him! I row mine own poat!"

"Will you promise me not to hurt him, if he comes on shore? He has done no harm to the boat."

The Welshman was on his feet in a moment, vociferating, "He take my penny to watch mine poat, and he tief her!"

Mr. Devereux grew angry, and, assuring the Welshman he was a blockhead, he turned away, determined to try to reach the part of the city he was acquainted with by some other means. The danger of losing the promised reward had more effect in subduing the owner of the boat than any words could have had; his whole manner was changed, as he ran after Mr. Devereux to say, "I won't peat him, sir, seein' as how you don't want me to."

"Perhaps you would let him go with us in the boat?" said Mr. Devereux, perceiving his advantage.

"Jist as you please, sir," with a bow, replied the man,

They proceeded together to the shore, whither the boy, readily interpreting movements in which his *personal* interests were so deeply concerned, was bringing the boat, with rapid and evidently exulting strokes.

"You tank de shentlemans, you pig tief!" cried the Welshman, shaking his fist at him.

"I was feared the gentleman would go, you see, Uncle Morgan, an' I was a goin' to go halves wid you; an' now I 'll scull, an' you can go 'long, jist ter see fair play."

And, the matter being thus arranged, Mr. Devereux, all the better, perhaps, for this interruption to his former train of thought and feeling, was once more floating on the now dusky waters. The early autumn night had spread its shades over the Battery, which was now filled with promenaders, whom Castle Garden, with its brilliant lights and band of music, vainly strove to woo from the fresh air, and the waving trees, and verdant sod.

As Mr. Devereux landed, he gave the promised two dollars to the Welshman, and, turning to the boy, said, in a good-natured tone, "What do you think I owe you, sirrah?"

"A dollar, please, sir!" was the answer, with a touch of the hat and a scrape of the foot.

"And how much of it will go to your mother?"

The boy hung his head for a moment, and then muttered, "I han't got no mother! I did n't know you was sich a gentleman, when I told you so."

"And what has my being a gentleman to do with your lying? It is the part of a coward to lie; a brave man speaks the truth always."

"I would n't git no dinner, if I did n't lie sometimes," said the boy, turning to Mr. Devereux a countenance in which there was so much of fearless frankness blended with shrewdness, that, with all its ugliness and coarseness, it attracted him; and, obeying the impulse of the moment, he said,

"How would you like to have some steady work to do, and be well paid for it?"

"I 'd like the pay part, fust rate."

"And not the work?"

"That 'pends on wot kind o' work 't was."

The glance that followed made this a question, and Mr. Devereux answered, "To do whatever you were ordered." It was the only answer he could give, for he had, in truth, no very well-defined plan in his head for the benefit of his

protégé, and provocation at his questioning and deliberating tone would probably have made him little disposed to satisfy his curiosity, even if he could have done so.

"An' if you was the gentleman as ordered me, I 'd do it, sure, an' ax no questions."

Flattery is a pleasant thing, and few souls are made of such sturdy stuff as not to yield somewhat to its influence; and perhaps that may account for the readiness with which Mr. Devereux answered, "Come to the City Hotel, to-morrow; — stay! take this card, show it to any of the servants, and they will bring you to my room; but it must be before nine in the morning, or I shall not be there."

"I 'll be there, sure, sir," was the prompt reply, and the boy bounded to the boat, as if some glad hopes had been awakened in his heart, while Mr. Devereux walked off in an opposite direction, carrying with him, too, some pleasant thoughts of a kind action performed, which brightened the cloud that still hung over his spirit.

An hour later, he was entering the drawing-room of Capt. Ross, bringing with him a basket of superb flowers, — not fastened on wires, as they often are, and artificially arranged, but cut as the flowers of a florist were never cut before, and lying in beautiful confusion, as fresh and dewy as if never severed from their parent stalk. Capt. Ross was absent, but Miss Briôt and Violet received him.

"Ah! Mr. Devereux, what mystery have you covered up in that basket?" cried Miss Briôt.

Smilingly he laid the basket on Violet's lap, and withdrew the covering of thin tissue-paper from it.

"Ah! quelles belles fleurs! — elles sont charmantes!" — and thus the voluble French woman continued to exclaim, while Violet silently bent over them, at once to inhale their fragrance, and to examine each separate beauty with loving eyes. No words could have made her delight more evident.

Mr. Devereux, seating himself beside her, asked, "Do you understand the language of flowers?"

"No. They all say the same thing to me."

"And what is that?"

"They say, 'Be trustful! — see how good our Maker is!'"

"Pure heart! ever lifting itself above the earth into the calm light of heaven," thought Mr. Devereux, but he did not say it. He sat enjoying her delight in silence as happy as her own. At length kind Miss Briôt left them, to get a vase and some water for the flowers.

"Violet," said Mr. Devereux, softly, as he lifted from the basket one of the little flowers so called, "you have no idea of how much loveliness that is to me the type!"

"She was very beautiful — was she not?" said Violet, simply, thinking only of Mrs. Ross.

All the passionate tenderness which Mr. Devereux had that day resolved, for the present, to subdue into silence, looked out from his eyes, as, bending forward, he fixed them upon her, and said, in a voice deep, low, and full of feeling, "She *is* more than beautiful!"

For the second time that day his words awakened a thrill of new and strange emotion in Violet's heart. It may be that she feared to betray it, for at that moment she started forward to meet Capt. Ross, whose step was heard approaching, and, holding out her basket to him, exclaimed, "See, Papa Ross, what beautiful flowers Mr. Devereux has brought me!"

"He is very kind," said Capt. Ross, in a constrained tone, scarcely glancing at the flowers.

"It is a parting offering," Mr. Devereux hastened to say. "I set out to-morrow on my projected tour through the South and West."

"Are you going?" cried Violet. "I thought — I understood —" She checked herself, and stood blushing and confused, for it suddenly occurred to her that Mr. Devereux

had intended the communication of the morning for no other ears than hers.

Before she had seen the glance of keen inquiry which Capt. Ross shot first at her and then at Mr. Devereux, the latter gentleman came to her relief.

"You understood me, this morning, to say that I had relinquished it, but I have since made some alteration in my plans. For one year I must delegate to other hands the execution of the projects we talked of. And now, Miss Briôt, what can I do for you at the South?"

"Send me some bright sunshine and warm air, to help me through the gloomy, cold winter!" and Miss Briôt shuddered at the anticipation of the chilling influences to which she would soon be subjected.

"And you — are your commands as easily performed?" Mr. Devereux asked, turning, with a smile, to Violet.

"More easily; I only want, along with the sunshine and the air, some of the beautiful flowers that grow in them."

"Your commands shall be obeyed; but I must trouble Capt. Ross for his address, that the genii to whom I intrust my offerings may make no mistakes in their delivery."

Capt. Ross seldom trifled, but he was very well pleased with Mr. Devereux this evening, and answered, gayly, "My address is Rossville, ——— County, New York," adding, as Mr Devereux took out his pocket-book and prepared to write it down, "Pray, make no mistakes; there are more than Miss Briôt who will be thankful for the sunshine and warm air."

"There shall be no mistake,"—to Capt. Ross. Then, to the ladies, "I hope they will win from you some kind thoughts for a wanderer who certainly will not leave America without seeing you again."

Mr. Devereux held out his hand to Violet. She placed hers frankly in it. There was something in the pressure it received, — something in the eyes which for a moment sent their quiet yet earnest gaze down, down, into the depths

of her heart, — that called the innocent blood into her cheek. Whatever might have been the emotion that caused this flush, there was certainly no displeasure in it, for she did not withdraw her hand from the lingering pressure of his. The parting salutations to Miss Briôt and Capt. Ross were more quickly made.

"We shall be happy to see you at Ross Hall, on your return from the South, Mr. Devereux," said Capt. Ross, with formal courtesy.

"I thank you," answered Mr. Devereux, pausing at the door, turning around, and repeating, with marked emphasis, what he had already said to Violet, — "I certainly shall not return to England without seeing you."

Mike was punctual to his appointment, the next morning. After some conversation with the boy in his own apartment, Mr. Devereux committed him to the charge of his servant, who, not without reluctance, undertook to procure for him the unaccustomed enjoyment of a bath, to teach him the use of a comb, and to make at the clothier's such changes in his dress as were necessary to fit him for becoming the travelling attendant of Mr. Devereux. Had Mike been of a doubtful mind, he might well have entertained some misgivings respecting his own identity, as he saw himself, clean, combed, and clad in a suit of gray cloth, reflected from the long mirror in Mr. Devereux's room. Mike had no doubts, however; he bore his honors with the equanimity of one who felt that they were not undeserved.

These preliminaries having been accomplished before noon, Mr. Devereux, attended by Mike, took passage in the steamboat for Albany about one o'clock in the afternoon of the same day. The *fast* boats of that day made this voyage in about twenty hours. His further destination Mr. Devereux communicated to no one. Mike had as little knowledge of where he was going as had the servant whom Mr. Devereux had left in New York, and to whom orders had been given to hold himself and his horses ready

for a long journey, as soon as his master should return to the city. More than a week had passed before that return. He came, unaccompanied by Mike, in the evening. Having given the orders necessary to an early departure on the following morning, Mr. Devereux walked out. The evening was cold, and he wrapped himself in a cloak, which, for once, he wore in the Spanish fashion, with one extremity of the great circle thrown over the opposite shoulder, and crossing the lower part of the face. He took the direction up Broadway, to the hotel in which Capt. Ross, detained, as he had been informed, by business, still continued. On one side of this hotel, and that the side occupied by the drawing-room of Capt. Ross, ran a narrow street devoted entirely to purposes of business. From this street Mr. Devereux had more than once ascertained that Violet was at home before he made the visit which might otherwise have been rewarded only by the measured courtesies of Capt. Ross. He knew, too, that, as the opposite shops were early closed, the curtains on this side were not often drawn. Into this street he now turned, and, walking slowly along its pavement, examined keenly the opposite room, he himself being in deep shadow, and that lighted by the full blaze of an argand lamp. There was little at first to reward him for his trouble. Capt. Ross was the only occupant of the room, and he sat beside the table on which the lamp was placed, reading a newspaper. Mr. Devereux walked on till he had reached Greenwich-street, and then returned up the same street to Broadway again. This time, the tableau presented within the room pleased him better. Violet had entered, and, having seated herself beside Capt. Ross, had drawn the newspaper from his hand, and was reading for him. Another turn, and the scene had changed again. Miss Briôt was now entering the room, dressed with her usual exquisite taste, and with more than her usual richness. She was drawing on a pair of white kid gloves, and the hood and cloak on her arm, as well as her dress, gave evidence that her evening

was not to be passed at home. Violet raised her eyes from the paper she was reading to look at her; to say something — something pleasant, Mr. Devereux knew, by the smile and playful bow with which Miss Briôt received it. Then Capt. Ross rose, assisted Miss Briôt to cloak herself, and prepared himself to accompany her; for he was a gentleman of the old school, and would have thought himself dishonored had a lady left his roof at that hour of the night accompanied only by a servant. Before leaving the room, he approached Violet, and stood for a moment at the back of her chair, with his hand resting on her head. She turned her smiling face up to him; he smiled, too, but not gayly, Mr. Devereux thought; then, bending down, he pressed his lips to her forehead, and, advancing to Miss Briôt, they left the room together.

Left thus alone, Violet no longer read. Resting her folded hands upon the table, she sat for a while with her sweet face downcast, and full of thought. Then, suddenly rising, she approached the window, looked out for a moment upon the starry sky, and then let her eyes fall upon the dimly-lighted street. Mr. Devereux shrank back, with the feeling that they were resting on him, and must recognize him, even through his wrappings. He was soon reassured, for her countenance retained its quiet thoughtfulness. She seated herself; it was there she sat on that morning, so eventful to him, when his feelings had so far escaped control as to become perceptible to Capt. Ross. Had she also seen them? Was there any association with that spot, with that interview, which gave to her face the expression of one who is dreaming a pleasant dream?

But she is interrupted. There is a knock at the door, and she starts from her seat and moves a few steps off, as if disliking to be found there. It is a servant, who enters, bringing in a small box. She takes it from him, and, as he leaves the room, she approaches the light, and removes the cover. Mr. Devereux presses nearer to the window. Now

it is that he desires most to see her; that he would count every heart-throb; that he would see every varying shade of color which comes and goes upon her soft cheek. The first expression on her face, as she opens the box, is one of surprise only; but she lifts a card from it, and reads a few words pencilled on it, and a smile like that of a happy child lights up her face. Gently, — one might almost say, tenderly, — she takes from the box the beautiful flowers it contains. She bends down her head. Is it to inhale their fragrance? She bends lower — lower. Her lips have touched them. Was the kiss but an offering to their beauty? If so, why does she drop them so suddenly, and look around her with the air of a startled fawn? But Mr. Devereux sees no more. He feels it a shame to stand thus and watch, unseen himself, her manifestations of feeling; yet it is hard to still his bounding heart, — hard to refuse all utterance to the passionate emotion which would break through every obstacle to claim her as his own — his own by the ordinance of Him who had made their hearts thus to answer to each other. Had the obstacles between them been physical, that emotion should have had its way; ay, he thought, with the exaggeration of passion, "though thousands had guarded her, she should have been mine!" In the energy of the thought, he stretched forth an arm, strong and sinewy; but it fell again to his side, as he recollected what it was that separated them. The barrier was not a physical, material force, — a force to be measured and computed, with which it would be a joy, in his present excited state, to cope. It was a feeling — a principle. It belonged to the spiritual — the infinite; and the strong man bowed before it, self-subdued, — subdued, yet not despondent. "It is but to be patient for a while," he said to himself. "Pure and truthful as an angel, she will not give her hand to another while I hold a place in her heart; and, if I do not, — but I will not doubt it, — still I may cease to do so. But no — no — I will not look that way. She has seen her influ-

ence over me. I will give her proof of my constant thought of her; and this great, ever-active love shall be the only bond upon her. I would not bind her by any pledge, if I could. I have nothing to regret, in this enforced silence, unless it be that I cannot lie down at her feet and tell her how deeply, how passionately, I love her, — poor words, which every man, who ever loved, has used before me! I could tell her that my whole life has been a search after her; that my follies, or my graver pursuits, were but efforts to forget the wants which she only can satisfy. It is the love of my childhood restored to me, with an element of power in it which that could never have had. Strange likeness! Those haunting eyes! — 'sweetest eyes were ever seen!'"

The next day Mr. Devereux set out on his Southern journey; and, about a week after, Capt. Ross, to the extreme regret of Miss Briôt, but the great joy of Violet and himself, returned to Ross Hall. The second day after their arrival, the first servant who opened the door found on the piazza a small box, directed to Miss Van Dyke. The box, when opened, was found to contain the most beautiful and fragrant flowers which the green-houses of that day afforded, — their long stems wrapped in wet moss, and the whole covered with cotton, before being placed in the box, to defend them more perfectly from the cold. There was no name with them. Every week, through the long, dreary winter, brought the floral offering, though not always on the same day of the week. The changes of the day, indeed, were such as led to the belief that whoever brought them suspected that a watch would be kept for him, and wished to elude observation. Perhaps no one felt less curiosity than Violet respecting the person who left the flowers at the hall. She knew to whom she owed them; and, as she saw the violets, which never failed to make a part of the collection, she seemed to hear a manly voice, subduing itself to unwonted gentleness, as it said, "They are types to me of one who is more than beautiful!"

Capt. Ross cried "Pooh!" and "Pshaw!" at the flowers. Miss Briôt looked mischievous, and asked, "I wonder when my sunshine and warm air will come!" Violet said nothing; but, when no eye was on her, she arranged and reärranged them with loving care, or gazed on them with such sweet thoughts written on brow and lip as Mr. Devereux would have given half his wealth to read.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Think! the shadow on the dial,
  For the nature most undone,
Marks the passing of the trial,
  Proves the presence of the sun.
Hope! with all the strength thou usest
  In embracing thy despair.
Love! the earthly love thou losest
  Shall return to thee more fair."

E. B. Browning.

A pleasant, quiet winter at Ross Hall was that which succeeded Violet's visit to Squan Beach; one of those periods of time, unmarked by great changes or vehement emotions, which may seem monotonous, even tedious, in their passage, but whose calm tranquillity presents itself to us, in after years and more agitating scenes, as the nearest approach our earthly life has made to the "green pastures and still waters" of promise. Never had it seemed so sweet as now to Violet to nestle to the side of Captain Ross, as he sat in his large reading-chair, and woo him from the thoughts which made his eyes grow sad and his brow stern, sometimes by claiming his help in the lessons which she still prepared regularly for him and for Miss Briôt, and sometimes by pleasant talk of that "good time coming" when Edward's blithe step and merry voice should be again heard in his home. And never had Captain Ross yielded more unresistingly to her influence than now.

"It is very bad for Captain Ross when you leave him," said Miss Briôt to her. "When you are away, he is dark and stiff and hard, just like a piece of iron. Now you are

here, he has grown bright a little, and he is no more iron, for you can bend him."

"I bend Papa Ross! Indeed, you mistake, Miss Briôt: no one can do that."

Violet spoke eagerly. She loved this strong, unconquerable nature. She would not have it bend even to her; rather was it her delight to yield to it — to be supported, guided, ruled by it. Thus has God made woman. The sense of power which is a delight to man weighs like a heavy burden upon her. Like the vine, it is only when the tendrils which have sought to attach themselves to a stronger and less pliant object have been again and again torn away, cut down to the stalk, that she learns to stand unsupported, to live an independent life; and in doing so, like the vine, she loses much of her own native gracefulness. She may be useful; she may bear abundant fruit to man's good and God's glory; but some of that loveliness which charmed the imagination and won the heart is lost. Till lately, there had been but one thought of Violet's heart not fully expressed to Captain Ross — but one feeling that had not been weighed and measured by his standard. This thought was of the tie which bound her to her parents; this feeling was apprehension of the cross whose shadow had ever fallen darkly on the path she was to tread, taming into quiet cheerfulness the exuberance of even her childish glee, and making her cling to her present blessings with a tenderness wrought into deeper devotion by her dread of their loss. Of late, perchance, other thoughts and feelings had been unrevealed — the thoughts and feelings with which she bent above her flowers; but these were so vague, so indefinite, they were but dreams, flitting through her mind so rapidly that all that was personal in them faded more quickly than the flush they awakened.

With the spring came other dreams, which were all told to Captain Ross, with full confidence in his entire sympathy. These were of Edward. He was coming home — a boy no

more. In a few months even the law would accord him a man's privileges, for he was not far from twenty-one. He had been nearly five years away; and Violet vainly tried to fancy the smooth-faced boy bearded and moustached, as she was told she might expect to see him.

Captain Ross had his dreams, too, that were not all told. He showed about this time an almost womanly anxiety about Violet's dress.

"She will probably go more into society after Edward comes," he said to Miss Briôt, whom on such a subject he justly considered his best counsellor; "and I would like to have everything handsome and fashionable."

"Suppose you send me to New York, with *carte blanche*, to furnish her wardrobe. I will promise you it shall all be right then, Captain Ross," said Miss Briôt, laughingly.

To her surprise, the suggestion was immediately accepted, notwithstanding Violet's remonstrances, and assurances that she wanted nothing in the world, or, at most, only such little things as Lizzie Jamieson could purchase for her. "As to going into society, Papa Ross, you know there is none here that I need dress very much for."

"But we shall not be here always. Who knows but we may see Saratoga before the summer is over? A travelled young gentleman will hardly be contented to remain a fixture here. Besides, I want you to look your best for this same travelled young gentleman," he added, with a smile that gave his face an expression more nearly allied to mirthfulness than any that Violet had ever seen it wear.

She smiled, too, rejoiced to think that he would be quite happy now; but she still objected.

"Edward, you know, Papa Ross, is bound to love me, let me wear what I will. Indeed, I do not believe brothers ever think much of such things."

"But Edward is not your brother, Violet."

"That is true," said Violet, sadly, and objected no more; for Captain Ross could not be more anxious than she that

this long-expected, dearly-loved Edward should continue to love her, as she was sure he had done when he went away, as his own dear sister.

The plans of Captain Ross did not stop with Saratoga and the summer.

"Violet," he said, suddenly, one day, when she sat at his study-table, writing to Miss Briôt, who was now in New York, while he lounged in his great chair with a book, which probably did not occupy much of his attention, — "Violet, I think we must go South this winter. My people have been too long neglected. We will not give up this home entirely; we will come here occasionally in the summer; but we must live there."

Violet answered neither by word nor look. Her eyes were fixed upon the paper, over which her pen had ceased to move.

"Do you not think I am right, Violet?" he urged, a little annoyed at her silence.

"Yes, dear Papa Ross, quite, quite right," she faltered out, striving in vain to keep back the tears, or to stifle the great sob with which she ended.

"What is the matter, Violet? Tell me, my darling, what makes you weep," he exclaimed, drawing her to his side, and tenderly kissing her flushed cheek, as she rested her head upon his shoulder; then, as she did not answer, adding, half reproachfully, "Have you any grief that you cannot tell me?"

"O, no! no!" sobbed Violet. "It was very foolish. I know it is all right — quite right, I knew it must come; but I could not help, at first, being a little sorry for myself."

"Sorry for yourself!" he exclaimed, with surprise. Then, as her meaning flashed upon him, straining her close to his heart, he added, "Foolish child! did you think we should leave you?"

Violet raised her head, somewhat comforted at this. Yet

she said, doubtingly, "Do you think my father and mother will let me go, Papa Ross?"

"I think Edward can get their consent," he answered, with another such bright smile as Violet had seen on his face but once before.

After this conversation they often talked together of that Southern home. Violet had a thousand questions to ask respecting it, and almost as many plans for improving the condition and advancing the happiness of its sable inhabitants. To one of her plans, — a school, which she would attend herself for two or three hours every day, — Mr. Merton objected that the law in the State of Georgia forbade teaching the slaves to read, under the penalty of a heavy fine and imprisonment. With her happy anticipations sadly damped by this intelligence, Violet applied to Capt. Ross to know if it were true.

"There is such a law, I believe," he replied, "passed at a period when the whole Southern country was thrown into great excitement by some fanatical movements in relation to slavery; but the law has never been enforced. I have taught many a slave to read, and so may you."

None was more joyous in the prospect of Edward's coming than his old nurse, Wild; and when the time before his possible arrival, having been reckoned by months at first, and then by weeks and days, dwindled down to hours, no sentinel on the walls of a besieged castle could have kept a more vigilant watch than did she, over the only road by which he could approach. In whatever she was engaged, she found some excuse for being in that part of the house which overlooked the road; and, as her eyes did not give testimony quite so true as formerly, and yet she was not willing to distrust their evidence, it was quite amusing to see the many little dashes she would make in the course of the day to the front door, with a face beaming with pleasure, to stand there a moment, and then come back very quietly, giving some such reason for the singular manœuvre as, "I

wanted to speak to the gardener, but he was out of hearing before I could get to the door;" or, "Jemmy Drew just went by, and I wanted to know how his mother was;" or once, "I hoped that old woman was coming here again — I do believe she stole our white rooster. I never have no opinion of a woman that wears a man's hat and coat, and rides a mule. You may laugh, Miss Violet, but I know such looking people carry off fowls in England, and why should n't they do it here?"

"Quite true, Wild," said Capt. Ross, gravely, though perfectly aware that Violet's laugh was not from any doubt of Goody Crane's thieving propensities, but from the conviction that each of these several persons had been, in turn, mistaken for Edward. Kind Mrs. Wild! she deserved to be gratified, for, after all, it was not that she desired to be the first to welcome her young master — no! that, she thought, belonged, of right, to his father and Violet; she only desired to be the first to say to them, "He is come!" And so, one evening, when they were at tea, having relinquished all expectation of him for that day, she rushed in, crying, "O, sir! O, Miss Violet! He's come!" and the next moment Edward was in his father's arms, and Violet in Edward's; the whole being done so rapidly that, though the operation was repeated several times, none of the actors in it could tell which part came first. And then Wild had her turn, and told, simpering and curtseying, how she had seen Mr. Edward first from her window, and how she had run to the door to be sure it was he, before she would tell anybody. And there he was in truth; no dream, but substantial flesh and blood, nearly six feet high, with the tone and manner of one who had long been accustomed to maintain his own place in the world, his face embrowned by travel, wearing, not a beard, but a soft, curling, black moustache, which even Capt. Ross, prejudiced as he was against moustaches, was compelled to acknowledge becoming.

For once in the world's history, expectation, highly raised though it had been, seemed not doomed to disappointment. Edward gratified his father by bringing home favorable reports from all sorts of professors. Miss Briôt declared that his French and his toilet were both worthy of Paris, and Violet found him quite as ready as herself to forget that he was not her brother. Together they revisited all their old haunts. Edward, through her, renewed his acquaintance with their former pets; together they sailed over the lake, galloped along the shore, or rambled through the woods; and still Edward showed no signs of that weariness of home which Capt. Ross had anticipated. He was never weary of telling, or Violet of hearing, of the quaint cities and the odd people, of the beautiful works of art, and the yet more gloriously beautiful works of nature, which he had seen.

"And, by the by, do you know that you have grown to be something worth looking at, yourself, *ma belle sœur*, with that pearly skin, and those soft brown eyes? Your hair is darker than I ever thought it would be," continued Edward, taking one of the gleaming tresses in his fingers, "though it has not lost the golden sheen yet. Now, don't blush, pray! It is such a comfort to be able to talk to a nice, pretty girl without her coloring up, and looking as if she expected you to make proposals in form! I think a sister a very agreeable and useful article, with which every man to whom nature has not given one should be furnished by law."

"In order that he may practise the pleasing art of pretty speech-making without danger of consequences, and be told, in turn, of course, how irresistibly charming he is!" answered Violet, looking up, with laughing eyes, from the sketch she was making.

On the lawn, between the hall and the lake, stood a huge black-walnut tree, with a bench encircling its trunk some ten feet about the ground. Seated there, with the great boughs bending over you, you were shaded even at mid-day,

while a thousand leafy fans waved around you, with every breeze that stirred. At one place the branches formed a pointed arch, framing, as it were, a pretty picture of the little stone church and the parsonage. This picture Violet had undertaken to sketch. Edward, as usual, accompanied her. He had brought one of Walter Scott's novels with him, to read for her and Miss Briôt; but Capt. Ross had very courteously, though, as Miss Briôt felt, none the less peremptorily, requested her, on that particular morning, to write some letters for him to gentlemen in the south of France, with whom he had been corresponding on the management of the silk-worm. It was a little strange, Miss Briôt thought, as he had written his own letters hitherto, that he could not do the same on this particular morning; she was almost tempted to believe that he did not wish her to be with Violet when Edward was there. Violet fancied that she went reluctantly; and, having in vain offered herself to Capt. Ross as a substitute for her governess, she very magnanimously proposed to defer her own enjoyment, in the reading, till Miss Briôt could rejoin them. Edward had read the book himself, and therefore made no objection to lay it aside and spend the morning in talk, first of scenes and pictures abroad, and lastly, as we have seen, by a not unnatural transition, of the living beauty at his side. To Violet's suggestion of the especial uses of a sister, he returned no answer; and when, surprised at his silence, she looked at him again, she found him sitting with his head resting on his hand, and an expression of deep, it appeared to her even of painful thought, on his face. With true womanly tact, she suffered not this perception to appear in her own manner, but, preserving her playful tone, she said, "May I disturb your grave lucubrations, most erudite philosopher, by asking you to enlighten me on the question, whether a sister may flatter herself that she has any further uses than those I have described?"

"You have hit the very subject of my thoughts, Violet," he cried, turning to her, with vivacity. "Would it be too much to expect from a sister that sympathy with youthful follies which older heads and hearts have outlived?"

"I think a brother may always be sure of a sister's sympathy; but, if by older heads and hearts you mean Papa Ross, you are doing him a great injustice in supposing, for a moment, that he has outlived his sympathy with you, Edward."

"There are some subjects," said Edward, while his face grew grave again, "on which a young man must always find it difficult to approach a father, — the more difficult, the more he loves and reveres him."

A pleasant imagination had seized on Violet's fancy. Edward had become attached to some lady abroad; this was what he found it hard to tell his father. She could readily understand this. It must be hard to talk of such feelings to one much older than himself. He was quite right; it was her place, as a sister, to receive his confidence, and become his mouthpiece to his father. These thoughts passed so rapidly through her mind, that Edward had scarcely finished speaking when she laid her hand in his, and said, smilingly, "I understand it all, Edward, and quite agree with you, that this is a case in which a sister may be useful. Come, tell me all about it! I am longing to hear, and I will introduce the fair lady to Papa Ross with such a flourish of trumpets ——"

"There is no fair lady in the case, Violet, and you do not understand it at all!" interrupted Edward, in a vexed tone, while he withdrew his hand, and looked as nearly cross as Violet had ever seen him.

"Make me understand it, then, my brother Edward," she said, more gravely and tenderly, again placing her hand in his.

"I dare say it will seem a horrid affair to you, Violet, and I don't pretend to say it was right; but it is what

happens every day to young men abroad. When I was in Paris, — for I may as well tell it to you at once, as to make a long preamble about it, — when I was in Paris, I wanted, of course, to see a little of the play which makes so large and so characteristic a part of Paris life. And the wish was gratified; I saw it, and paid pretty dear for the sight. Don't turn so horribly pale, Violet! I only lost five thousand dollars; very few come off so cheaply."

"And you did not have a duel? — you did not kill anybody, Edward?" cried Violet, breathing more freely.

"Duel! what should I have fought about? I staked my money and lost it, and there was an end of it; or, rather, I am sorry to say that was not the end of it; I had to borrow four thousand dollars from my banker, and, though I gave myself a wide margin, it is high time the debt was paid."

"And you want me to tell Papa Ross about it?" said Violet.

"Yes; and you may give him any promise you please, Violet, that I will have nothing more to do with play. I would not make myself such an incarnate fiend as some of the gamesters I saw there that night, not for all the wealth of the bank of England; and I would rather lose a hundred times five thousand pounds than send a poor wretch away in such despair as I saw some men sent from that table. It is like a horrid dream — I wish I could forget it!" and the young man shuddered.

"I wish you could," said Violet, softly, clasping his hand with a touch that consoled and strengthened him.

"And now, Violet, when will you speak to my father?" asked Edward.

"I think he ought to know it at once, Edward; I wish it had not been kept from him so long."

"And you will tell him?"

Edward looked at her inquiringly. She hesitated; his color rose, and he added, quickly, "I see you do not like to do it. Do not be disturbed about it; it would be un-

fair that you should suffer for my fault; I will tell it myself."

"Indeed, Edward, you mistake. I have not the least objection, on my own account, to tell Papa Ross; and I will do it, if you really prefer that I should; but I do think that he would be much better pleased, if you told him yourself. Nothing pleases him so much as confidence from us."

"I believe you are right," said Edward, after some seconds of silent thought. "The only thing, now, is to choose the right time, and get my courage up." He laughed, but not very heartily.

"I think the earliest time is the best. Suppose you let me go in now, and tell Papa Ross that you want to speak to him?" proposed Violet.

"Well," said Edward, with a great effort; really ashamed to let her know how his heart sank at the thought, lest she should doubt his manhood.

Violet waited only to say, encouragingly, "I know he will be more gratified by your telling than displeased with what you have done," and, springing down the steps, was soon out of sight, on her way to the house. But for very shame, Edward would have followed her, and retracted his consent. Violet, perhaps, was a little afraid that he might, and the fear may have quickened her movements. It is certain she lost no time on the way, and that, on entering the house, she proceeded at once to the study; and finding, to her great delight, that Miss Briôt had been dismissed, she approached Captain Ross, and, leaning over the back of the large chair in which he sat, said, softly and timidly, as if she were about to confess a fault of her own, "Papa Ross, Edward wants to speak to you under the walnut-tree; he would have come here, but he thought Miss Briôt was with you, and he wanted to see you alone."

At her first words the dreamy eyes of Captain Ross grew bright, and before she ended he had drawn her to his side, folded her closely to him, and kissed her cheek

with almost passionate fondness. "Send to him to come here, darling! If I am not mistaken, what he has to tell me will make me as happy as it has made him."

Quite puzzled at what seemed to her the no meaning of these words, she looked in his face, but could read there only exultation and delight.

"I hope you will not be angry with him, Papa Ross," she said, doubtfully, fearing some mistake.

"No, my darling, — must I promise you I will not? I assure you I never felt less disposed to be angry."

Violet would have gone back herself for Edward, but Captain Ross would not permit her to heat herself by another walk through the sun. He sent a servant for his son, and Violet could only watch for him from the porch, and whisper, as he passed, "I never saw Papa Ross so perfectly good-humored. He has promised not to be angry, whatever you may tell him."

Edward entered the study, and closed the door. Violet seated herself within sight of it, and watched with speechless anxiety for its opening.

There was something in Edward's face and manner which led Captain Ross to doubt the truth of his foregone conclusions, even before he spoke. His confession was heard with mingled feelings. There was much in it that must, of necessity, excite a father's regret; but there was much, too, in its manly frankness, much in the unaffected horror inspired by the scenes in which the rash curiosity and headlong impulses of youth had made him, for once, an actor, which could not but gratify a father's pride, and strengthen his confidence. As he concluded with an assurance that, dearly as his experience had been bought, it had been bought for life, the father stretched out his hand, and, clasping that of his son, said, "I believe you, my dear boy. Had I found this out through any other; had you made any attempt to meet this debt through the aid of others, or to obtain the money from me without a full reve-

lation of the purpose for which it was wanted, it would have made me miserable, for I could never have trusted you again; but now my confidence is increased, rather than impaired."

Edward colored, and, after a moment's hesitation, answered, "Father, before I accept your confidence, I ought to say, that, though I never intended to have the least disguise from you, I might have delayed my confession yet longer, or have made it through another, had it not been for Violet's persuasions."

"Violet was right; I thank her for it," exclaimed Captain Ross, warmly. "And now," he continued, quickly, "the only question that remains is, how shall this sum be paid? It is a question for you to decide, and so I will give you the data on which your decision must be formed. I have no ready money. A large mortgage rested on this property when I purchased it, and the gradual liquidation of this has swallowed up all which our expenses and the outlay that I have conscientiously made each year for the improvement of the Southern property, and the greater comfort of the people there, have left. This year the last dollar of the mortgage on this property has been paid, and there is but one objection to my raising money upon it by another mortgage."

Capt. Ross paused. Edward grew impatient. "And that objection, father?" he said.

"Is only this,—I have always regarded this place as Violet's. I can in no other way provide for her; for nothing shall induce me to sell, divide, or in any way alienate from you, my Southern estate."

"Cannot the sum we want be raised on the Southern property? As this would jeopard no interests but my own, I should like it better."

Capt. Ross shook his head. "If it jeoparded no interests but yours or mine, I should agree to it in a moment; but, Edward, little as the risk may be,—and I acknowledge it

is very little,—I cannot incur it for my people. In this you may think me unreasonable; but I will not give another man power over a hair of their heads. This has been my principle all my life, and I will not depart from it now."

"And the land—could not that be mortgaged?" asked Edward.

"The homes of my people!—the land without which I could not hold them! No, Edward! The departure from principle, the risk to them, would be the same."

"What is to be done, then, father?" asked Edward.

"The money must be raised here," said Capt. Ross.

"Violet's interests shall not suffer, father! I will pay off the mortgage, if I have to work for the money!" exclaimed Edward, warmly.

"I know it, my son!—and the sum is so small, that, if we make but tolerable crops, we can pay it off in a year. The only cause for regret is that, I fear, it will oblige us to let Violet go back to those people at Squan Beach this winter."

"Let Violet go back! O, father! how can you think of such a thing?" cried Edward, warmly.

"How shall I help it, Edward?" questioned Capt. Ross, more calmly, but more sadly, too. "You know I have no legal claim on her; for these people, distrustful of others from their own dishonesty, as well as from their ignorance, could never be induced to sign any papers. They have always steadily refused to let her go South with me; and I have, therefore, I sometimes fear, with culpable negligence of my duty, left my people all these years to an agent. The representations made to me lately have forced on my conviction the indispensable necessity of my presence there the next winter. I believe firmly that that man at Squan Beach values our Violet only as a commodity on which he can make money, by selling or lending her to the highest bidder. I had hoped to be able to bribe sufficiently high to induce him to let her go with me South; but now——"

He paused; but his silence was more sad than any words.

"Father, is there no way in which we can make Violet our own?" asked Edward, in a low, unsteady voice.

"There is one, Edward, — only one. To tell you the truth, when you asked to speak with me this morning, I hoped it was to propose that very thing. But we will not say any more about it; for I would rather the proposal should come from you."

"Father, pray tell me what you mean! I am sure you cannot doubt that I would think our Violet cheaply purchased at any price! O, father! how could we give her up? Surely you will tell me what I can do to prevent it!"

"Marry her, Edward! I know no other way."

The words were succeeded by dead silence. Edward had started visibly when first they fell on his ear, and then sat with downcast eyes, rigid and still as if turned to stone, while Capt. Ross fixed on him a keen, searching glance. At length the father said, "Well, Edward?"

Without raising his eyes, in a voice of forced composure, Edward answered, "Father, I have always regarded Violet as my sister."

"It is absurd to say that, Edward; for, in the first place, you were old enough when she came here to know that she was not your sister, — not connected with you in the most distant manner; and, next, I did not permit you to form any such intimacy with her as belongs to a brother; for I separated you when you were but fourteen and she was but eleven years old. No; it is not necessary to give any such reason, if you do not love Violet sufficiently to save her from a horrible fate by some — for my life I cannot call it sacrifice. For where will you meet with a lovelier, a more angelic wife? — the image, in every respect, Edward, of your sainted mother! But we will say no more of her. I will write immediately to New York, and you shall have the money you want as soon as it can be raised."

Poor Edward! Never had he so bitterly repented his

misdeeds, — never had he felt so humiliated, — thus to receive all, and give nothing. He looked at his father. He could not read the expression of his eyes, for they were averted; but the veins on his forehead were swollen, and the hand with which he played with the papers on his table trembled. He felt that it was no plan of an hour that his refusal to wed Violet had demolished, — that it was a life-long hope. The mention of his mother, too, — the first mention he had ever heard from his father, — had touched him deeply. He was not stone, though he might have looked it. He was moved, — he almost yielded.

"Father," he said, "let it be as Violet will. If she consent, so will I. But you must speak to her. I should not know in what words to make such a proposal to one with whom I have allowed myself all the privileges of a brother."

As his most earnest desire seemed just within his grasp, Capt. Ross, instead of the exultation which the more distant hope of it had inspired, felt an unusual misgiving. It was the natural distrust of his human, fallible nature, in the consciousness that he had been assuming a power which only an Omniscient Being should dare to exercise, — the power of ruling the destinies of others. He remembered with what strength of will he had formed, with what tenacity he had clung to, the purpose of making the child of another his own, — how he had ignored or overleaped every obstacle in his way to this desired end. And, now that it is attained, he remembers that God sometimes gives to man the desire of his heart, not in mercy, but in wrath, and he shrinks back and trembles.

"Edward," he said, "you love Violet? — you will be kind to her?"

"I hope, father, you do not think me so unmanly as to be unkind to any woman, — least of all, to Violet!"

"No, no, — not unkind; but she is very sensitive, you know."

"If she consent to marry me, father, I will do my best to

make her happy. I can say no more, and you must win her consent. I cannot propose it to her."

"Well, ask her to come here; it had better be done at once."

The remembrance that something yet lay between him and his will had re-nerved Captain Ross.

Edward found Violet sitting in the parlor, listless and idle — an unusual thing for her. She sprang to meet him, exclaiming, as she looked earnestly in his face, "Cannot Papa Ross do what you wish, Edward?"

"Yes, I believe so," said Edward, throwing himself into a large arm-chair, with a heavy sigh.

"What is the matter, then, dear Edward? for something is, I am sure!" cried Violet, pushing back the hair from his forehead, and pressing her soft, cool hand upon his brow.

He felt a strange reluctance to her touch, and, rising hastily, said, "You must go to my father, Violet; he wants to speak to you."

"But I am sure you are not well, Edward. You have worried yourself into a fever about this business. See, how flushed your face is, and your hand is burning!" clasping it as she spoke.

It was withdrawn quickly, almost roughly, while Edward exclaimed, "Do, Violet, go to my father; he is waiting to see you. There is nothing the matter with me."

He was sorry, the next moment, for having spoken so hastily; but it was too late. Violet was gone, without a word or even a look of reproach for the impatience she had so little deserved; only her silence showed that she felt it. Edward wished she had said something, even a single word, that would have excused him to himself for being angry with her. As it was, all his anger was against himself.

"I said I could not be unkind to a woman; but I find I underrated my powers," he said, with a bitter laugh, as the door of the study closed on her. "This little interlude will make a pleasant introduction to my father's proposal.

I wonder how she will receive it!" He walked two or three times across the room; looked, at each turn, at the closed door of the study; then took his hat and went out, feeling that he might thus postpone the dreaded interview.

Violet found Capt. Ross walking about his study. He, too, looked troubled and agitated; for he found it more embarrassing than he had thought it would be to approach this unconscious child-heart with the proposition he had to make. "How shall I begin?" he had asked himself again and again. She began for him.

"Papa Ross," she said, going up to him, with all her usual frank affection, and placing her hand in his, "I hope you can help poor Edward out of this troublesome affair. He has suffered so much that I am sure he will never be so imprudent again."

Capt. Ross placed himself upon the sofa, and, drawing her to his side, said, "I believe, Violet, it must depend, at last, upon you what I can do for Edward."

"Upon me, Papa Ross! I do not understand!" and her eyes, dilated with surprise, were fastened upon him.

"You know the reasons, Violet, that have made me decide to go South this winter. You think, with me, that my duty to my people demands it?"

"Yes, Papa Ross," she said; "but, excuse me, I was talking of Edward's debt."

"Well, listen, Violet. To go away a thousand miles from you, and leave you in sorrow and in want, my child, I cannot do it!" and he drew her close to his heart. "Yet, if I pay this money for Edward, I shall have no means of raising the further sum necessary to buy the consent of those people at Squan Beach," — he could not bring himself to say, "of your parents," — "to your going with me."

"Dear, dear Papa Ross! how shall I thank you for all your loving care of me?" Violet laid her cheek softly to his, and the heart of father and child beat against each other; and even while she rested in that loving clasp, she

whispered, "But you must pay Edward's debt; that is right; and I must go away for a little while. *They* will let me come back, I dare say." She would not say "my father and mother," lest it should grieve him. "It is God's will, dear Papa Ross; we will try to do it cheerfully."

"I will never part from you!" he exclaimed, passionately.

"Hush! hush!" said Violet, softly; "you must not say that, dear Papa Ross, for you know God has a thousand ways to separate us, if we refuse to do his will." Her cheeks were wet with tears, her voice was husky and came falteringly from quivering lips, as, still clinging closely to him, she continued, "I have always known this hour must come, since I was a very little child. Every night I have thanked God for having given me one more day with you; every morning I have prayed for strength to go, if they called me!"

"And, through all these years that I have considered you my own, — have folded you into my heart of hearts, — you have intended to leave me!"

Capt. Ross spoke in an aggrieved tone, and would have loosened the clasp in which he held her; but she grasped his hand, and clung all the more tightly to him, as she said, "Dear, dear Papa Ross, it would be too like heaven to stay always with you, to be always yours and Edward's; but God gave me to my father and mother, and gave them to me, and told me I must honor and obey them; and I have often felt, of late, that it was not right for me to stay altogether away from them — that I was neglecting the work which He had given me to do."

"Violet, you are wild! What work have you to do?"

"Did not my heavenly Father send me here — O, how can I thank him enough for that? — to learn his truth, in order that I might help my poor father and mother to come to him — that I might teach them about the blessed Saviour? O, Papa Ross! sometimes I think about this work till it

seems so lovely and pleasant that I am ready to leave everything and go to it at once, till I remember that I must leave you; and then my spirit sinks, and I am thankful for every day, every hour, with you!"

"You would be glad, then, to feel that it was right for you always to stay with me and Edward?"

"Glad! O, too glad! I dare not think of it!"

"Violet, have you ever thought of being married?" A thousand innocent shames dyed her cheek with crimson, and her face sank lower on his shoulder.

"You know, if you were married, your highest duty would be to your husband," continued Captain Ross; "for even the Bible bids you to leave father and mother and cleave to him."

"No one would marry my father's daughter," whispered Violet.

"Yes, there is one — one whom you have always known and loved — who will give you a right to the home that, you say, would be like heaven to you, and make you my daughter in truth."

She raised her head; her arms fell to her side; her face, from which the color was rapidly fading, was turned towards him, with lips apart, and eyes whose only expression was inquiry — an intense desire to understand.

"Only marry Edward, Violet, and all difficulties will be cleared away, for you will belong to us."

The pale face grew rigid, the distended eyes were fastened on him as by a species of fascination, but still she was silent.

"Speak to me, Violet!" cried Capt. Ross. "It is Edward whom I wish you to marry — Edward, whom you have always loved, and who has always loved you."

"My brother Edward!" broke from her, in a voice strained and unnatural; the words ended in a great sob, and, clasping her hands before her face, she wept with the passionate, convulsive weeping of a child. He tried to put

his arm around her, to fold her again to his side; but she drew further away from him, shivering and moaning like a sick child.

"Violet, speak to me! I have not deserved this repulse from you. At least, answer my question — what is the matter?" exclaimed Capt. Ross, with vehemence.

She removed her hands; she strove to answer him; but, as her eyes met his, the new feeling of desolation, of loneliness, overpowered her, and, with another cry, "No father! — no brother!" she yielded herself again to her sorrow. But Capt. Ross would not now be repulsed; he overpowered her resistance, drew her again beside him, passed his hand gently over her bowed head, as if smoothing her dishevelled locks, and pressed his lips to her hot brow. Under the influence of these caresses, the storm of passion seemed to abate, her sobs ceased, her tears were checked, and, withdrawing her hands from her face, and turning on him a pleading, piteous look, she said, "O, Papa Ross! how could you say such cruel words?"

Taking her hand in his, Capt. Ross asked, in a low, unsteady voice, "Violet, do you know why you were so dear to me, when you were a very little child?"

"Yes, Papa Ross;" and Violet hung her head, as if ashamed that she should have learned anything respecting his innermost feelings which she had not heard from him.

"You have heard, then, that you were like the loveliest creature on whom the sun ever shone! You are like her in all things — and she was mine, and, O! how loved! — and what a night of darkness followed her disappearance! My wife! — my child! — both!" The strong man trembled; his voice seemed choked. Violet sank on her knees beside him, and pressed her tearful face upon the hand she held. Capt. Ross resumed. "Violet, I do not love to recall the hardness and bitterness of t[illegible] years; but your eyes — my Violet's eyes — softened me into more human sorrow. I felt that you must be mine; that the power which had

impressed on you the perfect likeness of my lost one had meant you to be my comforter. It was not a question, it was a necessity to me, that you should be mine; and when Mr. Merton and your parents made the arrangement that you should remain with me till you were educated, I laughed at them in my heart, for I had already determined that you should be Edward's wife and my daughter. As such I brought you here and educated you. I sent him abroad while you were yet children, that you might not learn to feel as brother and sister to each other; and I sent for him as soon as I thought that either of you could be in danger of forming another attachment. And now, Violet, my child, whom I rescued from misery and degradation, whom I loved and reared, will you bring back the darkness to my life, the hardness to my heart? You, who, alone, of all the world, can give a little brightness to my old age, — will you refuse to be mine?"

"O, Papa Ross! What can I do? What can I do?" cried the poor child, cowering at his feet, and looking wildly around her, as if for some means of escape.

"Violet, this is a mere caprice — a whim! There 's not a drop of Edward's blood in your veins; and for this mere shadow of a shade you refuse to be my child, — my gentle nurse through the infirmities of age, my comforter in the hour of death! O, child! take not my Violet a second time from me!"

His voice was broken, like the voice of an aged man; his whole frame shook with overpowering emotion. As she looked in his face, it seemed changed and old; and, forgetting herself, forgetting all but him, she stretched out her hands to him, as she sat crouched at his feet, crying, "Papa Ross! I am yours! Do what you will with me!"

"My darling! my own!" he cried, as he lifted her in arms from which all trembling had departed, and held her in a close embrace.

Many emotions mingled to swell the tide of his joy, —

gratified affection, triumph in the attainment of a long-desired object, and generous delight in the future which he meant to make so bright for her. And she lay like a broken flower in his arms,—pale, dizzy, trembling, exhausted with emotion.

"My darling! you are faint, you need rest. You shall lie down now, and not see Edward till you are quite rested. Do not shiver so—poor, sensitive plant!—how could you stand a rough, coarse life? Come, let me carry you, as I carried you when you were a little child;" and he took her in his arms, and carried her up the private stairs which led from the study to his room, and through that to hers, and laid her on her own bed. As he looked in her face, he saw that it was very pale, and her eyes were closed.

"Are you ill, Violet?" he asked. "Shall I send Miss Briôt or Wild to you?"

"No, Papa Ross;"—the words dropped as from the lips of a wearied child, and still she seemed to have no strength to open her eyes.

"Poor child!" he said, laying his hand on her head, gently; "you are weary; sleep will refresh you. Let your dreams be of the bright future you have made for us all," he added, bending down and touching her forehead lightly with his lips. He was turning away, but she laid her hand upon his arm, and whispered, "Papa Ross, will you write to my father and mother? We must not speak of this as certain, till we hear from them."

"I will write immediately, my darling,—to-day,—and send the letter to Dr. Jamieson, requesting him to go down with it himself to them, that there may be neither mistake nor delay. Will that satisfy you?"

"Yes." She lay as still and breathed as quietly as a sleeping infant; and he left the room, fastening the door that opened upon the hall, that no one might enter to disturb her, but leaving open that into his own room. Through

this he came several times during the following two or three hours, to look at the treasure which he felt was now more than ever his own.

Capt. Ross met Edward with an outstretched hand and beaming eyė. He really loved his son better for being the medium through which he had secured a closer hold on Violet. Edward could not command voice for the inquiry which he looked. It was answered, almost gayly, "It is all right, — she is ours, Edward; but she would rather not have the affair spoken of, till we hear from those people at the beach. And, Edward, I think, perhaps, you had better not speak to her about it at present; she is so young and sensitive, her spirits have been a little hurried already."

"It shall be just as Violet pleases, sir," said Edward; yet, even while well pleased to postpone an interview which must be embarrassing to both parties, he colored with annoyance at the thought that their present relations were probably as little agreeable to Violet as they were to himself. This feeling was not diminished at dinner, when Wild, having been sent by Capt. Ross to Violet, with whatever he thought likely to tempt a delicate appetite, returned to say, "Miss Violet begs you to let her sleep, sir;" — adding, with the loquacity of an old and privileged servant, "And it seems to me, sir, sleep will do her more good than eating; it was always Miss Violet's cure, you know, sir, when anything troubled her."

Edward flushed and looked up quickly, as if he thought Wild had brought a personal accusation against him; but Capt. Ross answered, blandly, "Yes, Wild, — or made her particularly happy, either. Any excitement, Dr. Jamieson says, in such sensitive organisms, is apt to be followed by excessive languor, and it is fortunate indeed when the exhausted spirits repair themselves by sleep."

Notwithstanding this very lucid explanation, given, as he felt, for his especial benefit, Edward was not quite satisfied. The suspicion of Violet's aversion to what was far

more his father's desire than his own excited in him none of the restless, agitating apprehension of a lover; but rather a brotherly care for her happiness, a friend's calm determination that her peace should not be endangered to secure any good for him. He ordered his horse after dinner, took a long, brisk canter around the lake, stopped for an hour at Mr. Merton's, and returned just as the shades of evening were closing in. He found Violet in the parlor. She was sitting near a western window, reading by the fading twilight. She did not even look up to welcome him. He missed the sisterly greeting, the outstretched hand, to which he was accustomed.

"Violet, that is hardly the best thing for the aching head from which my father reported you to be suffering to-day," he said, approaching her, and laying his hand upon the open page.

"My head does not ache now," she answered, with a faint smile, raising her eyes from the book, yet not fixing them on him.

"If it does not, it soon will, reading by that light," he rejoined, quickly.

She did not appear to hear him, but still sat with her eyes fixed on the page before her, for several minutes, till Miss Briôt entered, when she closed the book and laid it on the table near her. Edward took it up; it was a French treatise on chess. "Are you a chess-player, Miss Briôt?" he asked. Miss Briôt was, and so the board was brought out, and red and white were ranged again in conflict less deadly than of old, and an occasional "check," or a debate on the propriety of a move, was the nearest approach to conversation between them for the rest of the evening; while, equally silent, Violet sat with some piece of feminine work in her fingers, on which her whole mind seemed fixed. A contrast this to the evenings of the last few weeks, when the hours had flown so rapidly by, in pleasant, easy talk, their glad hearts throwing their own brightness over every

subject; when she had sung the old songs he loved; or he had given them, in a full, pleasing tenor, some of those German songs, which stir the spirit like a battle-cry; or Miss Briôt had played for them, and they had danced, he teaching her those graceful waltzes, then rarely seen in America, and never regarded there with such general toleration as has since been accorded to the less graceful and freer polka.

A few days passed thus listlessly away, the three in the little party who were most closely connected by affection and identity of interests striving each to avoid a tête-à-tête with the other. Miss Briôt was invaluable under such circumstances, and her kind, affectionate heart expanded with pleasure at finding herself so constantly in demand. Ever pleased to give pleasure, she entered the breakfast-room one morning from an early walk, with a bouquet of flowers in one hand and an empty box in the other. "Here are your flowers, Violet; and here is my sunshine," she said, gayly, holding the empty box in the sun-light, as she spoke.

Violet looked quickly up, and held out her hand for the flowers; but, before she had touched them, her eyes met Edward's, fixed upon her with an expression of inquiry; and, drawing back, while cheek and neck and brow became crimsoned, she said, languidly, "Will you please to put them in water, Miss Briôt, and let them be set in the drawing-room?"

"I thought no hand but yours was worthy of arranging these particular flowers. See, they are very beautiful! Such roses! Such heliotropes! Such tube-roses! Ah, here is some of the beautiful mountain-laurel, too! What, you will not even look at them? You *capricieuse!* Well, you shall smell them, at least;" and she held the bouquet, rich in all the luxuriance of spring, close to Violet's face.

"We have so many flowers now, you know," said Violet, apologetically, as she withdrew it

"Very well. I will tell Mr. Devereux that you only value his flowers in winter."

"And may I ask who is Mr. Devereux? I have not heard of him before. Yet he must be a neighbor worth knowing; he must, at least, have gardens worth seeing, if they furnish such flowers as these;" and Edward took the bouquet from Miss Briôt to examine it more closely.

"Neighbor!" cried Miss Briôt; "if he were a neighbor, that bouquet would be a trifle; but what will you say of a gentleman who, when he is ever so many hundreds of miles away, still does send such beautiful flowers?"

"I should say," and Edward fixed his eyes on Violet, as he spoke, marking how the hand with which she was pouring out his father's coffee trembled,—"I should say that he must be greatly interested in the lady for whom he took such trouble. In the present case, I should like to know something more of him; and you have not yet answered my question,—who is this Mr. Devereux?"

"Ah, you must ask Violet about him," said Miss Briôt, mischievously, quite unconscious of the peculiar relations of those to whom she spoke.

Violet did not speak; her very eyelids quivered with the consciousness that she was the object of especial attention to each of the party. Capt. Ross was annoyed at the little scene for more reasons than one; and, to put an end to it, answered Edward's question himself.

"You had better apply to me for information of Mr. Devereux. I knew him when he was a boy in England. We met him in New York the last autumn. He is one of the old bachelor tribe; accustomed so long to live for his own pleasure, that he is not likely to surrender his freedom, unless the fear of leaving his fine estate to a stranger should induce him to marry when he has grown old enough and worldly enough to prefer property to pleasure."

"He must be a very gallant old gentleman," said Edward,

laying down the flowers with somewhat diminished interest in them. "But where is he now?"

"Travelling in the Southern and Western States."

"And sends such bouquets as these to a place in the interior of New York! Is the man a magician?"

"He has that which is worth all the magic in the world, —gold. I suppose he must have employed some one about here to send those bouquets, in fulfilment of an idle promise, that Miss Briôt should be supplied with Southern air and sunshine, and Violet with flowers, while he was away."

"Depend upon it, Miss Briôt, the old gentleman," Edward began, but was interrupted by Miss Briôt, who, having been absent from the room, in search of a vase for the bouquet, had not before heard this epithet applied to Mr. Devereux.

"Old gentleman!" she exclaimed, warmly. "Do you call Mr. Devereux old? A man not yet thirty, and one of the noblest-looking men I ever saw!—not beautiful, like you, Mr. Edward," she added, with a gay laugh, answering Edward's low bow with a sweeping curtsey, "but so—so —well I should say of him *il a l'air noble*."

"And, pray, how much did you see of him in New York?" asked Edward, seemingly determined to prosecute his investigation, though he could scarcely have failed to perceive that his father was not well pleased with it. There was another of the party as determined as himself that he should know all that could be told of Mr. Devereux's connection with them.

"I met Mr. Devereux,"—the name was scarcely audible,—"at Squan Beach, when I went to see my mother, the last summer. He went there to shoot snipe,—and he was very kind to me."

Violet's voice was low, and her words came slowly, but very distinctly, upon the ears of the listeners. When she had finished speaking, she rose and went away to her own room. Capt. Ross, too, withdrew to his study,—perhaps,

to avoid further questioning from Edward, who was now left alone with Miss Briôt. That lady continued for a while to arrange her flowers silently and smilingly. At length, looking up at Edward, she laughed slightly, and said, with a meaning shake of the head, "*C'est dommage;*" for she often — almost always — in a tête-à-tête with Edward, used her own language.

"What is a pity?" he responded, assured that he should now learn all that Miss Briôt had to tell.

"Que Monsieur Devereux ne sache pas son bonheur."

"Quel bonheur?" asked Edward, willingly using a language which secured them against danger from listeners.

"N'est-ce pas bonheur à avoir gagné un cœur à la même temps le plus sensible et le plus delicat?"

"Et vous croyez qu'il l'a gagné. But let us come back to plain, downright English, which there is no mistaking." And he drew his chair nearer to her, and spoke in lower tones. "You really think that Violet loves this man?"

"Ah! there it is, now! Your English has no delicate shades of sentiment. I do not like to say 'loves this man.' It is only to be said when one stands before the priest, — *mais que voulez vous?*"

"No; English — I must have plain English," ejaculated Edward.

"Well, then, she does not like to speak his name; it comes very low, and with a certain consciousness, from her lips. She blushes when another speaks it suddenly, and *malgré* her caprice about the flowers, this morning, she has never before suffered another person to touch them; and it was the prettiest study to watch her face when she bent over them — it said so many pretty things. Now, is that English for love?" asked Miss Briôt.

"I think it is. And this man — why did he leave her?"

"That is what I cannot tell. He is an Englishman, you know, and they always take things coolly; yet he is not cold, I believe."

Edward's color rose, and his voice assumed a deeper tone, as he said, "Miss Briôt, you have been much in society; you would see what might escape my father and Violet. Was he playing with her?"

"No! no! He is not a man to do this! He is un ame simple — vrai — ah! now I know; you call it earnest."

"And he loved her?"

"I am so sure of it, that I will stake my only diamond ring on it;" and Miss Briôt held up the finger on which she wore it.

"And left her!" said Edward, musingly.

"Ah! never mind! the sun sets, mais, ne craignez pas, il reviendra;" and Miss Briôt rose to carry her flowers to the drawing-room, looking gayly over her shoulder at Edward, as she went.

As for Edward himself, it would not be easy to say whether this conversation had relieved or annoyed him most. Relieved, greatly relieved, he was; for, if Miss Briôt's impressions were correct, — and he felt assured they were, — there was an insurmountable barrier — a barrier which, so far from having been reared by his selfishness, only the basest selfishness could disregard — to the accomplishment of that design of his father to which he felt that no time and no thought could reconcile him. Yet, as he knew not how Violet had struggled, nor how her consent had, at last, been rather snatched from her feebleness than won from her heart, he could not but be annoyed that by her acquiescence in the wishes of Capt. Ross she should have left the whole burden of objection upon him. His conclusion was that she deserved to be punished for her want of ingenuousness; and, as he believed the present state of affairs between them was, at least, as painful to her as to himself, he would leave her to suffer from it for a while, but no power on earth should, in the end, force him to marry her.

"It will be as well to wait till I hear what Mynheer and Fraulein Van Dyke say to the matter, before I speak. They

may take all necessity of making a row with my father off my hands. In the mean time, Miss Violet will be sorry enough for having treated me with so little frankness. But, poor child! I love her too well, after all, to make her miserable for life; and yet I doubt if there are many women who would think themselves miserable in such a marriage." And Edward turned to the mirror, pushed his hair from his forehead, curled his moustache, and, repeating Miss Briôt's "*l'air noble*," added, "A giant seven feet high, I suppose, and large in proportion! Well, *chacun à son gout*," and, with a lighter heart than he had had for days, he went off, humming an air from a fashionable opera, to order his horse for another lonely ride.

At a somewhat later hour on the same day, in the stage-office of a little country town, about twenty-five miles from Ross Hall, before the small square window which offered the only means of communication between the seller and buyer of tickets, stood our old acquaintance, Katy Van Dyke, her shrewd, bright face not quite so much at ease as it commonly appeared. She wore her usual short skirt of striped cotton, the colors being bright yellow on a blue ground. To her accustomed home costume was added a pair of dark-blue woollen stockings and coarse shoes, which her short skirts showed to great advantage; a red shawl, and a bonnet of pink silk, trimmed with tawdry, faded flowers, probably bought in Chatham-street as a great bargain, and doubtless considered by Katy as giving the last finish to her costume. The bonnet, not having been intended for so large a head as Katy's, was worn somewhat in the present style, showing the face in all its dimensions, and the dark hair, whitened by the dust of travel more than by marks of age. Having established herself at the window, and squared her elbows so that none could steal in on either side of her, Katy began: "Well, mister, what 's to pay for the stagin' to G.?"

"Two dollars," answered the official, and, accustomed to

economize both words and time, he held out his hand for the money.

"Two dollars!" exclaimed Katy. "Now, did ever anybody, under the sun an' arth, year o' sich a thing!"

"It is two dollars; and, if you don't want a seat, pray stand aside, and let others speak."

"Well, but I does want a seat; and you need n't be so dreadful short with a body! Two dollars 'ill pay for yer time an' yer seat, too, seems to me."

"Well, let's have your money," said the agent, in a resigned tone.

"An' an't I a gittin' it?" answered Katy.

She had laid down on the window-ledge a small bundle, which apparently constituted the whole of her baggage, and, with her rough, ungloved hand, was busily untying the knot which fastened it. This accomplished, she drew from it another and smaller bundle, or bag, secured in the same way; from this she took a third, and from the third a fourth. The last, being opened, was found to contain a number of coins of various denominations, from twenty-five cents to five. In each piece of money a hole was drilled, through which a small cord was passed and knotted securely; all pieces of the same denomination being strung on the same cord, so that there were several distinct strings of coins. Selecting that composed of quarters of a dollar, Katy severed four of them from the string, with the scissors at her side; then, putting up the remainder, she took out the dimes, or pieces of ten cents, and very deliberately, and not without various efforts to get something taken from the charge, cut off ten of these. At length, all being paid, the money restored to its own bag, and each bag to its proper receptacle, Katy was turning away, when the agent cried, "Stop, aunty! wait a minute!"

"You don't want no more, does ye?" cried Katy.

"O, no!" he replied, as he gravely cut with his penknife the small strips of twine knotted into each piece of money.

"I want to give you these; they 'll help with the filling for the next carpet."

"So them will!" said Katy, as, without a smile, or the slightest consciousness of ridicule, she received them, and deposited them in her pocket. "An', now, whar 's the G. coach?" she cried, elbowing her way through the amused yet impatient crowd, to the door.

A sunny summer's afternoon was it, bright and warm and dusty, when Katy arrived at the terminus of the stage-road, five miles from Ross Hall. Several wagons were in waiting near the stage-office, driven by country lads, who had been sent over to meet the expected mother, sister, or friend, and convey them home. They gathered around the stage as it stopped, and their homely but hearty greetings were pleasant to hear. So Katy must have felt, for she stood, bundle in hand, looking on with a broad smile of sympathy, till she saw them moving to their several wagons; then, as with a sudden thought, she cried, "Can any on yer tell how fur 't is ter Ross Hall?"

"Jist five miles, ma'am," answered a man who had helped his mother into his wagon and was about stepping in himself, but paused to reply to her, with that civility which the poorest woman rarely fails to find in America.

"Be any on you a goin' that way?" asked Katy, doubtfully.

"Yis," said the same man, "I be a goin' to Rossville, an' that 's jist by."

"An' could ye gi' me a lift?"

"To be sure; get in."

"An' so you 're a goin' to the Hall?" questioned the woman, by whom Katy had seated herself, before they had proceeded far.

Katy assented, not without a feeling of increased importance in the announcement.

"To see Miss Wile, I guess."

"No. I 'm a goin' to see my darter."

"O! your darter lives to the Hall! Well, it's a good place, I guess."

"My darter Mary. I call her Mary, yer see, but the cap'in, why, he calls her Wi'let—Miss Wi'let Wan Dyke."

"Why, you don't tell, now! Jim, jist year! She says she's Miss Wi'let's ma! An't it dreadful curious?"

Jim gave a long, scrutinizing look to Katy, and then, with a low, prolonged whistle, returned to his horses.

"If yer don't believe me," said Katy, reddening, indignantly, "ye can come with me to Ross Hall, an' see!" and so they did.

Miss Briôt and Violet, Capt. Ross and Edward, were sitting on the wide piazza at Ross Hall, which enjoyed at that hour the double advantage of being densely shaded and of being fanned by the lake breezes, when a wagon was seen approaching. Such vehicles usually turned aside from the main avenue, at a distance of three or four hundred yards from the house, into a by-road which led to the offices in the rear of the Hall; but this passed the turn, and came boldly on.

"Who can it be?" said Capt. Ross, going to the verge of the piazza, and then descending a step or two in order to obtain a nearer view. "It is Jim Drew who is driving; he must be bringing some person who came to G. by the stage-coach to-day. Yet there are only women with him; one is his mother, and the other—bless me! Violet! my child! it is—" The captain checked himself; but his speech or his silence were alike immaterial now, for Violet was at his side, and there, just below them, within a few feet of the steps, was Katy Van Dyke. What a contrast they presented! Violet, with her delicate features, her fair skin, now waxen in its colorless purity, her graceful form arrayed in white,—to look at her was to think of a snow-drop, or a white lily, or whatever is most spotless and refined in nature. Beside her was Capt. Ross, with his fine head, his proud eye, and aristocratic bearing; and before them Katy as we have de-

scribed her, hot and travel-soiled, carrying her calico bundle under her arm!

Violet had not recovered her usual strength, and as her eyes fell on her mother — *her mother!* — the blood rushed to her heart, all things became indistinct to her, and, reeling, she would have fallen, had not Capt. Ross caught her on his arm.

"Edward!" he cried. "She has fainted! Call Wild!"

For a few minutes all was confusion, and Katy lost her anticipated triumph, for, before order was restored, her attendants had vanished, a little frightened at the scene. Wild alone knew what to do; and, for a time, ordered and was obeyed by all.

"Don't be frightened, Miss Briôt; it's only a faint. Mr. Edward, help your father. This way, Captain, if you please, to the study, and lay her on the couch. Why, Mrs. Van Dyke! but I can't stop, now. She 'll soon come to."

And so she did, almost as soon as she was laid on the couch. As she opened her eyes, Capt. Ross drew Katy almost rudely out of her range of vision.

"Wot maked her faint?" asked the unconscious Katy, in a whisper.

Low as the whisper was, it reached Violet's ear, and recalled the past to her. She tried to turn herself in the direction whence the voice seemed to come; but Capt. Ross bent over her, obstructing her view, while he said, "Lie still, my darling!"

But Violet's memory was now fully aroused, and she whispered, "My mother is here; let me see her."

"Miss Briôt, you and Edward had better leave us; there are too many around her," said Capt. Ross; and not until they had gone did he permit Katy to come forward. Awed by the unaccustomed air of all around her, Katy lost much of her bluff manner. Violet was the first who spoke, though it was only to say, "I hope you are well, mother,"

as she tried to lift her still dizzy head to receive the kiss with which Katy saluted her.

"Middlin' well, but tired as a dog a joltin' in them 'are stages! I should n't wonder if I was all black an' blue a bouncin' up an' down!"

"Would you have a cup of tea, mother? Mrs. Wild will bring it to you here."

"Well, I should n't mind ef I had; an' a snack o' summat to eat, too. It does make one dreadful hungry to be shook to pieces so."

Mrs. Wild went out to provide the cup of tea and the "snack." Capt. Ross was unwilling to leave Violet alone with Katy, but he withdrew his chair to a distance from the couch, and, taking a book, *seemed*, at least, absorbed in its pages. Katy began to feel more at home, and suddenly and startlingly broke the profound stillness of the room by exclaiming, "Cap'in, I guess I might as well tell you at oncet wot I come fur; 't an't no use ter be a shilly-shallyin', yer see —"

"Excuse me, Mrs. Van Dyke," exclaimed Capt. Ross, with a degree of ceremonious politeness that completely overpowered Katy, "but we will, if you please, postpone all conversation on the subject until to-morrow. I hope Wild will be able to make you comfortable this evening."

"Wild and I will make her comfortable," said Violet, affectionately, laying her delicate white hand on Katy's, and looking up at Captain Ross with a smile.

"And to-morrow," he resumed, "I will hear whatever you have to say."

As Captain Ross permitted no communication with himself on this subject during the evening, so he took care to prevent any with Violet, never losing sight of Katy till he saw her fairly on the way, with Wild, to the room prepared for her.

Violet's night was disturbed and anxious. Naturally enough, Katy's vulgarities of look, speech, and manner, had

forced themselves even more decidedly upon her here, contrasted as they were with the refinement of all around her. And yet, there was a resentful jealousy of any perception of this vulgarity by others. A third and holier influence was in conflict with both these contradictory sentiments, even that whose dictate is that we should honor our parents, and be humble and gentle towards all. Weary of an almost sleepless bed, she rose unusually early, the next morning. Oppressed by a dread of coming trial, never had she felt so forcibly the blessing of being permitted to look to One all-wise and all-mighty for support. At such moments we need no exhortation to prayer, — it is enough that we know it has been permitted. Forgetful alike of infidel objections and theological dogmas, the craving heart, the bewildered, helpless spirit, casts itself at the feet of Infinite Mercy, with voiceless supplications for protection, guidance, and blessing. Tranquillized by an hour thus spent, Violet, though very pale, could smile on Capt. Ross, and show a sweet serenity of aspect to all, when she was called to join the family at breakfast. Capt. Ross had slept as little, and looked well-nigh as pale as herself, and far less serene. He could not find comfort and support where she had found it; for prayer without submission is a mockery, and he could not submit. Edward, too, looked gloomy and dissatisfied. Should Katy have come to give her consent to Violet's union with him, would she continue to throw the whole burden of resistance to his father's will upon him? And should he have courage to resist it? As he looked in the pale yet resolved face of Capt. Ross, he almost shrank from the encounter.

Breakfast was at last over. Capt. Ross had prolonged it till he could prolong it no more. He rose, and, addressing Katy, said that he would be glad to see her in his study. He evidently wished the interview between them to be strictly private; but Katy felt, as she rose to follow him,

that she was about to beard the lion in his den, and she wanted the support of Violet's presence.

"Come, Wi'let!" she exclaimed, holding out her hand for her. She had not called her Mary since she came to Ross Hall.

Violet arose, trembling, and clung to her mother's hand for support. Edward looked inquiringly at his father; but Capt. Ross evidently desired to confine the interview to the smallest number of persons possible; perhaps he thought that Edward's happiness in the prospect of the marriage would not be increased by much intercourse with the mother of Violet. Whatever were the motive, he declined his attendance, saying that he would send for him, if it were needful. Though relieved at escaping "that horrid woman," Edward could not but think it strange that he should be shut out from a conference on a subject so nearly interesting him.

Violet, feeling that her trembling limbs could scarcely support her, dropped upon a chair as she entered the library. Capt. Ross stood near her, leaning upon the mantel-piece, and Katy seated herself nearly opposite to them.

"And now, Mrs. Van Dyke," said Capt. Ross, "I would like to know if you and Mr. Van Dyke received a letter which I sent you lately, through Dr. Jamieson."

If he had hoped, by thus taking the initiative in a conversation he could no longer postpone, to be able in any manner to modify Katy's views, or even to influence her modes of communication, he soon found that he had mistaken the mind with which he was dealing.

"Yis, Cap'in, Doctor Jimersin bringed the letter, an' telled me all about it; an' that 's jist wot I comed fur. Yer see, Cap'in, it won't do, nohow, for your boy to marry my gal; Dick won't year to it."

"In other words, Mrs. Van Dyke, your husband wants better terms than I have offered him. Well, let him make

his own proposal, and, if it be not entirely beyond my power, I will consent to it."

"Now, Cap'in, yer don't hit the right nail on the head. It can't be, nohow; not ef yer was to promise to make Dick President of the United States, and me a grand lady. Nohow yer can fix it, it can't be!"

The brow of Capt. Ross grew dark, and his eye flashed. He was not accustomed to be thus opposed. A moment's reflection, however, showed him that nothing was to be gained by a quarrel with Katy, and he constrained himself to answer, quietly, "And wherefore not, Mrs. Van Dyke? You surely will not expect me to give up a plan cherished for years, without some reason."

"As to that, Cap'in, there 's reason enough, an' more 'an enough; but I an't a goin' to gi' none. Wi'let 's ourn; she was ourn when she was a baby, an' we never signed no papers; an' Mr. Merton promised she 'd larn to do wot we said, and now I 'll see how 't is. I say, she shan't marry no Edward Ross. Ye year, Mary!" said Katy, using purposely, for the first time in the presence of Capt. Ross, the name which was connected with that period of Violet's life when she was altogether hers. Katy's manner was rude; her tone, defiant. She was not the first person in the world, who, having found reason against him, had resorted to passion as a defence.

Pleased as Violet doubtless was by Katy's determination, she was tortured by her manner. Involuntarily she drew near Capt. Ross, and held out her hand to him, as if to shield him from the rough attack of her mother. To Katy's appeal to herself, she answered, "I hear you, mother, and I will obey you, as it is my duty to do; but, surely ——"

"And do you owe nothing to me? Is all duty, all love, to be given to those ——"

Capt. Ross could not finish his sentence, for Violet had pressed close to his side, and, in her agitation, had, half unconsciously, put her cold hand to his lips, exclaiming, "O

no, Papa Ross! please do not say those words! Do not say anything to create angry feeling! It can only separate us, and you know that would tear my heart! I owe everything truly valuable to you; I will give you all that I can without disobeying God's commands!"

These words were spoken in such low, hurried tones, that Katy scarcely understood their meaning. Capt. Ross was more distinct.

"My poor child!" he said, encircling Violet with his arm; "my poor darling, what a life will yours be! But promise me that you will not leave me alone in my old age, and I will be satisfied."

"'T an't no use fur her to promise, Cap'in, 'cause I come fur her now to go hum to Squan, jis' as straight as she kin go."

"And are you going?" asked Capt. Ross of the trembling girl; "are you going?"

Violet gazed, with a heart-wrung, piteous look, into the fiery eyes that fastened themselves on hers; then she turned to Katy, who sat evidently striving to harden herself for the performance of the task she had undertaken. There was no mercy, no relenting, in the face of either; each was intent on his or her own will; and, sinking on her knees, and covering her face with her hands, she made her appeal to Him who is tender and full of compassion, and whose ear is ever open to the cry of suffering. Gentler and tenderer feeling came over the heart and the face of Capt. Ross as he looked upon her.

"My child!" he exclaimed, as he raised her from the floor, "my precious child! I have agitated you; but now come here, and listen to me."

He led her to a window, out of Katy's hearing, and, speaking in subdued tones, said, "Be composed, my darling, and hear me. This is nothing but a device on the part of that woman and her husband to make money out of you. My darling, your innocent mind cannot conceive the depth

of wickedness of which they are capable. They will sell you, Violet! — sell you, I say! How shall I make you understand the abyss of degradation into which they may force you? You can never do them any good, and they will ruin you! Heaven never demands such a sacrifice! The first law impressed on our being is that of self-preservation; and, if you would preserve yourself from worse than death, you must escape from these people! And you shall escape! —— No, do not interrupt me till you have heard all, for time is precious! You need not speak a word; only put your hand in mine, as a token that you will be mine, and in an hour we will be off. Wild shall pack what you really need, and, with my own horses and a light carriage, we will be in New York long before that woman, in time for the Liverpool packet of the day after to-morrow, and we will go to England and spend our lives in peace and freedom. —— Hush! hear me further. I will not ask you to marry Edward; only be my child, my own Violet, and in all else you shall do as you please. And now, here is my hand, Violet; lay yours in it, and all is done."

"Dear Papa Ross! what shall I say? what can I do? cried Violet. For an instant there arose before her a vision of a home in England; a home of refinement and peace, of social pleasures and domestic affections; of all that could gratify the taste, improve the intellect, or lift the soul heavenward. Who shall say that warmer tints did not mingle with the picture, — that, in that decisive moment of her life, she did not remember Oakdale Priory, and its master, and mingle with her vision a fragment of the sweetest dream to which the young heart ever abandons itself? And her next word — nay, her next movement — might secure all this. And there, in contrast, with all its vulgar associations and coarse hardness, stood that rude home on the desolate beach, beside the ever-sounding sea. How could she accept the one? How could she reject the other?

"If I could but see Mr. Merton — he would tell me what was right," she said, softly.

Captain Ross thought she was yielding; he feared Mr. Merton, and answered, quickly, "No, Violet — you must decide for yourself."

The harsh voice of Katy interrupted him.

"Wi'let! I tell you wot — I an't a goin' to stan' here all day a waitin' on you, an' you a shilly-shallyin' that way! I jist tell yer, now, ef yer'll go with me fair an' easy, well an' good; an', if you won't, why, then Dick 'ill have ter come fur you; an' I guess ye'll come wi' him!"

"You hear her, my precious Violet! Have mercy on yourself as well on me!"

He drew her into an adjoining room, near whose open door they stood, as if he would protect her from rudeness while she was with him. O! how Violet longed to throw herself upon his bosom, to entreat him to hold her fast, to guard her from all the misery which she saw and felt — from the darker evils which he predicted for her. She felt as a little child might feel, who, having gone astray, finds itself wandering in dark places, amid sounds of dread, and, seeing through the gloom its mother's face, and hearing her voice, is yet kept by some irresistible influence afar from her. It is only at such a crisis that we learn something of the soul's power. The languid movement of thought is quickened into the wild rush of the whirlwind; in an instant it flies over the whole domain of being, — from the past, to the present, the future; or, rather, past, present, and future, seem blended into one. Even while that vision of delight had reared itself before Violet's eyes, — aye, written on the very walls, as it were, of that home of joy — the religious teachings of her childhood, and the words of God's holy Book, which exalted parental authority, were present to her. Mr. Merton's voice seemed sounding in her ears those truths, to which, with a full appreciation of her peculiar temptations, he had given

great prominence in his lessons to her. Him, she was told, she could not see; but the Great Teacher was never afar off. She raised her eyes with her heart heavenward. The little church at which, but one short year before, she had registered her vows, was in sight, and the cross gleaming on its spire flashed on her eye. And was she about to flee from her cross? — to lay aside the badge of her Christian service? Was not this the very trial she had anticipated? the very hour for which she had watched? the very temptation against whose power she had sought strength from Heaven in every hour of prayer? And strength was given. She felt that she was not alone; that, though she must tear herself with bitter pangs from the human love that would have led her on through pleasant places, she was clasped by a mightier hand, which she might trust not for life only, but forever. It might lead through rough places, through the arid wilderness, or the deep sea; but it would be with her, and bring her at last to an everlasting home in the Golden City. We do not say that all these thoughts, in the order in which we have given them, had passed through Violet's mind. It seemed rather like the flash of inspiration, than the progression, however rapid, of human thought, which made her turn from that glittering cross, with pale face, and quivering lips, and sobbing breath, to cry, "I dare not — I dare not! This is my cross, and I must bear it! O, Papa Ross! love me and help me! — I must bear it!"

"You are mad!" he cried; "you know not what you are braving! I will not let you go with her! I will force you to be happy; you dare not resist me! Look at you now, — pale, trembling; why should I not at once take you away?"

She was, as he said, pale and trembling; she felt feeble, almost to fainting — dizzy with the thought of where her next step would lead; yet she held to her purpose as with a death-grasp, and he saw it. He believed that, should he

carry her off, the same spirit that prompted her decision now would make her break from all the enjoyments and endearments of his home, on the first opportunity that presented itself, and return where the voice of duty called her. He must, if possible, convince her reason, win her mind's assent to the propriety of what he counselled. It was his only hope. He had been walking with rapid steps across the room; he now stood again before the chair into which she had dropped, and exclaimed, with passionate earnestness, "Do you know, Violet, that these people to whom you insist upon going are very wicked?"

"The more need," she murmured, "that their child should try to win them to better things, by those blessed teachings which, through your goodness, she has enjoyed."

"Do you know —" He hesitated; there was something in that pure child-face which seemed to warn him not to sully her ear with the sound, her heart with the thought, of what was in his own mind. But the hesitation was momentary; he grew desperate, and proceeded. "Do you know that they may urge, may force you into sin, — into such pollution that your very life shall become a loathsome thing to you, and that the pure of your own sex shall bow their faces with shame at the sight of you?"

"O, Papa Ross! do not tempt me so! Help me! help me, as you did when I was a little child! Tell me of the good angels, who guard even the feeblest child that tries to do right! Tell me of the ever-blessed God, who will never forsake those that trust in him!"

Turning away in despair, Captain Ross moved towards the door of the room in which they had left Katy, but returned again to say, "Violet, it is the last time! When I have opened that door, and called your mother, it will be too late for change."

"Call her, Papa Ross!" she gasped, feebly.

Without another word he passed into the study, and, leaving the door open behind him, invited Katy by a mute

gesture to enter the room he had left. Katy never forgot that look and gesture.

Violet would have risen to meet her mother, but her head swam, and, sinking back into her chair, she could only hold out her hand to her, and look up into her face with a faint smile.

This submissiveness touched Katy's heart — for, after all, she had a heart — more than the stormiest grief could have done; and but for the remembrance of Dick, whom, strange as it may seem, she both loved and feared, she would now probably have revealed all she knew, and thrown herself on the *generosity* of Captain Ross. We do not say his "*mercy,*" for this Katy never thought of needing. Even at this moment, when her culpable silence, and her yet more culpable assumption of a mother's authority, were inflicting on the hearts of father and daughter a pang worse than death, Katy considered the balance in the account between Capt. Ross and herself as being decidedly in her favor. "Fur did n't Dick fetch her ashore? an' did n't I tek care on her, an' the best o' care, too? an' little he 'd ha' had on her, ef it had n't been fur Dick; an', if he never sot eyes on her agin, he owes we for twelve year an' more o' her." Such was Katy's reasoning; and so she *comforted herself,* and remained steadfast to her resolve of taking Violet to the beach, though she consented to wait one day longer for her.

For Violet and Captain Ross the bitterest pang was past; and they awaited the parting hour — the former with the calmness of exhaustion, the latter in the sullenness of despair. One effort he made to induce Mr. Merton to use his influence with Violet in his favor; but he soon found that the good pastor and himself differed as much as ever in their views; that, though Mr. Merton mourned over Violet and grieved for him, he did not feel himself at liberty to counsel her to oppose a parent's wishes. Captain Ross even fancied that, though the good pastor did not exactly

say "I told you so," he might have something of the spirit which prompted that famous observation, as he recalled his early opposition to the adoption, now the source of so much pain. But this was probably but the fancy of a "mind diseased."

One comfort Violet had through all. Edward was again her brother — all her brother; and, though his first use of his restored privileges was to storm at her for leaving the Hall, at his father for permitting it, and, more than all, at Katy for commanding it, there was inexpressible sweetness to her in the very anger which marked the brother's love. All his father's authority was necessary to prevent his showing his opposition to Katy in action as well as word; but this Captain Ross well knew, even if it postponed the parting with Violet, would do so at the expense of making it more entire and irrevocable at last.

Every arrangement which the tenderest and most generous affection could suggest was made by Captain Ross for the comfort of his adopted child. She was to receive from him three hundred dollars a year, in quarterly payments. The payment of another hundred to Katy obtained her permission that Wild should go with Violet, and remain at the beach during the summer.

"Should you need more money, Violet," Captain Ross said, "you will not hesitate to ask for it."

"No, dear Papa Ross: it is so sweet to feel that you are still doing for me!" Violet answered, laying her hand in his.

A mist obscured his sight for a moment, and he had to clear his throat, before he added, "There is one subject on which I must speak to you, and I beseech you not to forget what I say. Should you need protection from violence or cruelty, the law will give it to you. Do not interrupt me, but remember, in such a case, that, if I am at a distance, Dr. Jamieson will act for you. I can do no more."

A sob from Violet was her only answer.

The long, weary day, the longer and more weary night, were at an end. The last hour had come, and still Violet strove to smile on Captain Ross, to say a few cheerful words to Edward and to Miss Briôt; but her pale face and quivering lips made the smile a mockery, and the words ended in a sob. All seated themselves at table, as usual; but to none except Katy was the breakfast more than a form. Still Violet lingered at the table, for to rise from it would be the signal for her departure. The clock struck eight, and she knew it could no longer be delayed. She raised her eyes to Captain Ross, and saw his pale face, and sad, heavy, sleepless eyes, turned upon her; and, rising quickly, went to the room that had so long been hers, and, throwing herself on her knees beside the bed, pressed her face upon it to stifle her sobs. Wild came to call her; and, putting on her bonnet and shawl, she followed her, with faltering steps, down stairs. In the hall an unexpected trial awaited her. The servants had assembled there to bid her farewell, and pressed around her with streaming tears and loud sobs. She tried to say a pleasant word to each; but her voice failed, and she could only give them her hand, and weep with them. Then she found herself pressed in Miss Briôt's arms, and striving to say something of her gratitude for all her love and care. Released by Miss Briôt, she turned to look for Edward and Captain Ross. Mr. Merton, who had come over to accompany her to the post-town at which she would take the stage, said, "This way, my dear," and led the way into the study. There sat Captain Ross, in tearless and speechless grief, while Edward stood near him, striving to hide the tears that would not be restrained. Clasping Edward's outstretched hand, Violet sank on her knees beside Captain Ross, and sobbed out, "God bless you, dear, dear Papa Ross, and my brother Edward, and be good to you, as you have been good to me!"

The pride of manhood was overpowered in Edward, and,

covering his face with his hands, he sobbed aloud. At the sound of his weeping, Violet strove to rise, that she might comfort him; but her head reeled, and, utterly exhausted by such varied excitement, she would have fallen, had not Mr. Merton caught her; and, while she was yet but half conscious of his purpose, he had borne her to the carriage, and lifted her into it.

CHAPTER IX.

"Only add
Deeds to thy knowledge answerable, add faith,
Add virtue, patience, temperance, add love,
By name to come called charity, the soul
Of all the rest; then wilt thou not be loath
To leave this Paradise, but shalt possess
A paradise within thee happier far."

MILTON.

It was the second week of May when Violet went to Squan Beach. And, O! how wearily passed the days, for the two or three succeeding weeks! She had no great cause of complaint. Mrs. Wild had taken care to bring everything necessary to comfort that she knew to be wanting at Squan Beach; and Katy, influenced, probably, by a very solemn promise made to Mr. Merton in parting, was more than usually kind to her; while Dick saw her seldom, and spoke to her still seldomer. It was no violent grief she felt. The friends and home whom it had so afflicted her to leave seemed to have faded into indistinctness,—to have receded into dim distance. Like Mariana in the moated Grange, had she complained at all, it would have been only that she was "a-weary, a-weary." Wild was seriously uneasy about her; and, finding that all the decoctions and infusions which, at her instance, she was induced to swallow, were of no avail, she had made up her mind to go to New York herself, and consult Dr. Jamieson, when there came a change. Weeks of complete inaction had restored her exhausted powers, and Violet began to wake up to the conviction that she was not doing her work,—that she was sinking under her cross, not bearing it. She began by

unpacking her books and the few little articles of *bijouterie* which she had brought with her from the Hall. There were associations with each of these which awakened many a painful thought; but, when all were arranged in the upper saloon, which Katy had again appropriated to her, though she looked at them through eyes dimmed with tears, there was a pleasant home-feeling at her heart which repaid her for the exertion. The next thing was to try to give a somewhat more comfortable aspect to the rooms inhabited by Katy herself; and this was soon accomplished, with the aid of Mrs. Wild, who willingly made one or two journeys to the town of Squam in a farmer's wagon, to please Miss Violet. If there was anything that especially delighted Katy, it was to see her house look finer than that of any of her neighbors. She was, therefore, greatly gratified by these improvements; and, in the good humor they excited, she readily consented to many suggestions of Violet, some of which concerned her own dress. With a neat calico or gingham dress, cut and made after Mrs. Wild's pattern, with her gray hair brushed smoothly back, and covered with a simple cap, Katy was a very respectable-looking person. Much had thus been done, in the course of a few days, to give at least the aspect of civilized life to Violet's home; and, to her own surprise, the work had interested her so much as to cheat her of many a sorrowful and repining thought. It was still very sad to wake in the morning to the slow consciousness of where and what she was, — still weary work to look forward to the long-coming hours of day, — it was still as a slave driven to task-work that she entered on its duties. But work brought forgetfulness of herself; and, when the day was done, she lay down to rest, at peace with herself and with Him who, she loved to think, had prescribed every step of her course.

As yet, however, she had not touched that great work the dream of which had sometimes made her almost willing to relinquish the happy home of her childhood for its realiza-

tion. Would it not be a holy work if she could bring to her own home the truth that purifies, — if she could introduce there, and into the degraded community around her, that Spirit which glorifies the meanest lot, and brings order and beauty out of the most discordant materials? Gently, timidly, she felt her way towards this great purpose. She resumed her readings, having added to her books, after her last visit to the beach, many which she hoped would prove interesting and instructive. Again she won permission from Katy to close the readings in the evening with a chapter from the Bible; and when, one evening, she ventured, with a faltering voice and trembling heart, to add to this a simple evening prayer, no objection was made. Dick was not often present at these readings; and, if he were, he always stalked away when the Bible was produced. But her mother heard, and that was much. Then she began to cultivate an acquaintance with the children, but especially with the little girls, whom she met at play on the beach; and many a child went home with a little book, a bright piece of ribbon, some calico patches for a quilt, or other trifle, which "the lady" — her only name amongst them — had given her, "and had told her *such* a pleasant story." Then they began to wish that they could read the pretty books themselves; and the mothers, won by her kindness to their children, raised no objections when she proposed to teach them. Soon she had eight girls, from six to twelve years of age, whom she taught daily to read and sew, — rude, dirty children, forming no romantic picture, but young immortals, awakening a Christian's interest, notwithstanding.

And, now, was Violet happy? Not according to the world's notions of happiness; but she was, for the most part, at peace. For the most part, we say; for it cannot be denied that she had moments of intense suffering, when some word, or the sight of some familiar object,

"Touching the electric chain wherewith we are darkly bound,"

brought back upon her soul the past so treasured and so lost, or when a moment of leisure set her thoughts free, and they went forth into the future, and, finding no rest, returned to tell her that the waters of the deluge that had swept over her, had covered every green thing in her life. The worst, in poor Wild's apprehension, was, that, in the very struggle of her soul out of the darkness of its sorrow toward the heavenly light, the frail body seemed to be wearing away. She was always pale now, except that, towards evening, sometimes, a brilliant color burned on her cheeks, and gave peculiar brightness to her eyes. It was very beautiful, but Wild did not like it.

"How purty she be!" said Katy, gazing on her with admiration.

"Ah, Missis Van Dyke!"—and tears came into Wild's eyes, and she shook her head mournfully,—"she looks like a angel; but I'm afraid it's because she an't far from being a angel!"

Katy did not like such speeches,—they made her uncomfortable; and Katy had found the tender spot about Mrs. Wild, by touching which she could always drive her into her own measures.

"Now, Miss Wile, I don't see wot meks you say so! The chile's well enough, now she's done moping; an' I kin tell you, ef Dick years o' yer puttin' sich a thing in her head, you won't be long wi' yer 'Miss Wi'let.'"

And, dreading Dick as second only to the great adversary of man in his power of doing harm, and considering separation from "Miss Violet" as, at present, the worst of ills, Wild readily promised that she would never again suggest the possibility of Violet's becoming an angel. But the next packet that Violet sent to Ross Hall carried with it, under the same envelope, the following communication from Wild to Capt. Ross:

"HONORED CAPTAIN: I take the liberty to write you a few

lines, sir, and to send them under Miss Violet's cover, though I would not like for her to read them, because I am going to write what I promised not to tell her; and I promised that, because Mrs. Van Dyke said Mr. Dick would not let me stay here, if I told; and I should hate to leave Miss Violet here by herself, and she ill; not that she is that ill to keep her bed, or to call herself ill, sir; but I do not like to see her look so pale, and move about so weak-like all the morning, and then have such a red in her cheeks, and such a bright look in her eyes, all the evening; and so I thought, sir, if I wrote a line to you, that you might write to Dr. Jimerson, and so he might come and see her; but, if you please, sir, to ask him not to talk about my letter, for the reason I said; and so, sir, if you will please to excuse this great liberty, I remain your faithful and humble servant,

"MARTHA WILD."

To find an opportunity for a letter from Squan Beach to any post, was not an every-day occurrence; and, when there were opportunities, Violet was not always informed of them, as Dick felt no desire to facilitate her correspondence, though not positively prohibiting it, — a measure which, increasing the solicitude of her friends, might have induced visits to the beach that would have been even more unwelcome than letters. The packet containing this particular communication from Wild met with more than usual obstructions and delays before it reached the hand of Capt. Ross; yet it was not without its effect, as will hereafter be seen.

In the mean time, another letter, written about the second week in August, and directed, in a very unreadable hand, to "Muster Duvroo, Nuorleens," was despatched from the post-town near Ross Hall, through which Capt. Ross received his letters. We consider it as highly creditable to the ingenuity of the *employés* at the general post-office that this letter, which had been forwarded there, after having

been sent to various places whose names began with "Nu," should at last have found its way to the place and been remitted to the hands for which it was intended. As its contents may be of some interest to the reader, and as we think it deserves preservation for its original orthography, we shall insert it here. It began without date or address, as follows:

"Win yu brung mee hare an sint mee tu schule, yu niver thaut hou moch gud me ritin ud du yu, maby you did int thenk ide larn ritin but i tuk tu ut natral uts tha spillin us buthurs mee intirly, i rites nou beakase sumthin as happind as i thenk yude like tu no. maby you did int thenk ide no hoo tha flours wus fur but win i sede ur ledda us purty an frish us tha wus thimsilves i node tha wus fur hur, an nou shese gon an bin karrid uff an ive med frinds wid ur by an hee tills mee shese gon tu skwum an i thenk tha flours ot ter go tu skwum tu un soe i teld muster grant the mun us meks tha bookies an hee ses heele giv mee a bit ritin tu a frind as meks bookies in York wich ante fur frum skwum un all ill bee rite, an so ime a goin tumurro. ive med munny bee hanfools a gyardnin fur mustur grant wen i was int tu schule an tha close yu giv me is gud, an tha boorde yu ped yusilf, and soe i kin go ware i plase an i plase tu go tu sqwum ware the leddis gon. no mower at prisint.

"Wun theng mower yule wundur hou i cumd tu no yu wus tu nuorleens i hurd yu till mustur grant yude sind im a flour he wunted frum thare."

Having perused this letter, the reader will scarcely feel so much surprised as did Violet herself, when, on the very ledge of her own window, one morning, late in August, she found, not a bouquet, but a basket of flowers, such as Mr. Devereux had once brought her, fresh with the dews of night, and exhaling fragrance from every petal. How her heart sprang to greet them! What bright hopes seemed

written on their leaves! He knew she was here! such was her conclusion; and he continued to send her these flowers as proofs that she was not forgotten,—as pledges that they should meet again! So much seemed certain to Violet; but was this all? Was it only the hope of seeing an absent friend again, which so often, during this day, caused her to sit, with work or book before her, indeed, yet evidently with thoughts far away, while a flush rose to her cheeks, and a smile to her lips, which made her look as had looked the happy Violet of Ross Hall? A hundred times that day did Mrs. Wild bless the flowers and Mr. Devereux; for that he sent them had been no secret to any at Ross Hall. Mrs. Wild had her dreams, in connection with them, as well as Violet; but her thoughts were yet more occupied with the curious puzzle of how they came there.

"Are you sure they are from the same person, Miss Violet?" she asked.

"Quite sure," Violet said, with a blush and a smile. She had not shown Wild the card which lay in the basket beneath the flowers, and which still, somewhat curiously, announced that there were air and sunshine for Miss Briôt, as well as flowers for her.

Violet had never loved to talk of her flowers; and, as no objection had been made by Capt. Ross to her receiving them, it never occurred to her, as a question of propriety, that her mother should be informed of them. As Katy rarely came into her rooms, she was not likely to see them. If she did, Violet would doubtless answer truly all her questions; yet she probably did not regret, when she went to dinner, to find that Wild had been as silent as herself.

A few days after this very agreeable surprise, Dick brought down with him in the sloop, from New York, a flashy young man, with a profusion of rings on his fingers, and a large gold chain around his neck. A box of wine and brandy formed part of his baggage, and he was followed by a handsome pointer, which impressed Violet as

by far the nobler animal of the two. Violet was sitting with Katy when he entered with Dick, who introduced him in a style peculiar to himself.

"Yer 's my 'oman, Katy, Mr. Spriggins; and this yer 's my darter."

"Good-morning, Mrs. Van Dyke; good-morning, Miss Van Dyke. Mr. Van Dyke, take care of that box! If them bottles get broke, no more of that stuff 's to be had short of my cellar. I always carry my own wine and brandy, Miss," addressing Violet, as if he thought the information was of particular interest to her; "for it is astonishing what stuff people *will* give you to drink, if you don't."

Violet made no more reply to his important communication than a glance,—cold, certainly, and perhaps somewhat haughty; for there was that assumption about him which is the very essence of vulgarity, and which provokes contempt from the gentlest spirit. He was unabashed; and, seating himself near her, he turned to her quite familiarly, with the question, "Do you love champagne?"

Annoyed by his familiarity, Violet would have avoided answering him; but Dick, who seemed to stand by for no other purpose than to hear the dialogue, said, sharply, "Don't ye year Mr. Spriggins a talkin' to yer?"

A modest man would have hesitated to repeat his question in reply to her "What did you say, sir?" but Mr. Spriggins was unawed, and answered, "I asked you if you loved champagne, Miss."

"I seldom drink any kind of wine," Violet replied, simply.

"O! I know—so all the young ladies say—ha! ha! ha!—they never like any kind of wine! They can't bear it!—O, no!—and so they drink it up to get rid of it!—ha! ha! ha!"

Dick and Katy joined in the laugh—Katy saying, "You know all about it, Mr. Spriggins."

"Yes, indeed! I understand the girls pretty well. Don't I, Miss? Say, Miss,—don't you think I do?"

Forced by Dick's eye to answer, and provoked by this folly, Violet replied, "Indeed, sir, I can form no opinion of your understanding."

"Good that — very good! — ha! ha! ha! — a very fair pun! I sometimes make a pun, myself. One day I saw a lady reading a book with a red cover, and I told her it must be confessed it was a book that was a great deal red! — ha! ha! ha! — You don't take, Miss Van Dyke? — ha! ha! ha! — a great deal red! — r—e—d, red! — ha! ha! ha!"

It was an inexpressible relief to Violet when Dick was called out of the cabin; for then she could escape to her own room, from this very witty gentleman.

For a few days he was too much occupied with fishing and shooting to give her much annoyance; but soon these amusements lost all their attraction, or she gained favor in his eyes; for he began to pass much of his time lounging about the house or its neighborhood, and seizing every possible opportunity of addressing her with expressions of admiration, and more than insinuations of designs which she felt as an insult.

"Miss," he said to her, one day, when he found her doing some work for Katy which obliged her to sit in the cabin with her, "you don't wear no jewelry. I think such beautiful fingers had n't ought to be without beautiful rings. Now, if there's anything in this world I do admire, it is a beautiful hand. As I told Jim Hearn, one day, says I, 'Jim, if I ever do ask for a lady's hand, it shall be a beautiful hand.'— 'And I'm sure, Ned,' says he, 'you'll make it more beautiful, by the rings you'll put on it.' Now, there's a ring, Miss," — showing one, the immense diamond in which, even Violet, with her slight knowledge of such affairs, pronounced, at a glance, to be false, — "that I got dirt cheap. Two hundred dollars, you know, was cheap as nothing for such a diamond."

"Two hundred dollars for that piece o' glass an' that little bit o' gould?" cried Katy, in astonishment, as, indeed,

she might well have been, at such an assertion. "You must ha' plenty o' money, to throw it 'way like that, Mr. Spriggins!"

"O! that's nothin'! You ought to see my diamond studs. I gave fifteen hundred for them — five hundred a-piece. But, now, Miss, just give me the pleasure of seeing this ring on your finger!" He bent forward, as if to put it on; but Violet withdrew her hand quickly beyond his reach. "You 're skittish, Miss," he exclaimed. "I did n't mean to ask to put the ring on yet — not yet, you know — ha! ha! ha! — that 's a good one! but just you put it on, that I may see how an engagement-ring would look on your finger. An engagement-ring is always diamond, you know."

"Excuse me, sir; I never wear rings," said Violet.

"But, then, you mean to wear a ring, one of these days! You don't mean to be an old maid; that would never do — you 're too pretty for that; and, besides, I know a man, though I won't tell you his name yet, that hopes to have the pleasure of putting a ring on the third finger of your left hand, one of these days."

Violet could endure no more. Springing from her seat, she ran quickly up to her own room, and surprised Wild, who was there, by dropping on a chair, and bursting into tears. Wild looked on pityingly, her own eyes watering, and her breath coming quickly; but she said nothing, for, with all Violet's gentleness, it was not easy for any, not even for an old and privileged servant, like Wild, who was regarded by all the family as a humble and faithful friend, to intrude into her confidence, or penetrate within the limits of reserve which her own manner prescribed.

Violet was to learn, however, that even her own apartment did not offer an effectual barrier to the bold and impertinent pursuit of Mr. Spriggins. She had dismissed her children, one morning, and was endeavoring to fix on a book the thoughts which she felt it was not safe to leave free, when her door opened, and the face of Mr. Spriggins

appeared within it, saying, "Miss, you had n't ought to shut yourself up so! You know what the poet said, about 'beauty was made to be seen.'"

"Excuse me, sir," said Violet, rising, "if I ask you to withdraw. I am permitted to call this room my own, and no one comes here without an invitation from me."

"Well, but it would n't do for you to invite me, you know. Young ladies don't give no invitations to young men. O, no! never — ha! ha! ha!"

"At least, sir, I have not invited you; and again I must ask you to do me the favor to withdraw."

Scarcely could a better example have been found of the influence which circumstances exert upon character, or of the spirit's power to remould, as it were, the outward form, than Violet presented at that moment. The broad forehead, which had hitherto seemed formed only for the home of serene thought, was slightly corrugated; there was severity as well as firmness in the eyes which fixed themselves unwaveringly upon him; a slight color had risen into the pale cheek, and upon the compressed lips sat an expression of determination not wholly untinctured by scorn. Even Mr. Spriggins was not quite insensible to the influence of her aspect. He stepped back towards the door; but, gathering courage from her silence, he paused to say, "Do you know, my dear Miss, that it is very becoming to you to be a little angry? Now, I 'm thinking that when you 're Mrs. Spriggins — now, don't blush so, my dear girl! — I raly did n't mean to say that just yet; though, sence it 's all settled with your father and mother, I don't see why I need to stand shilly-shallying."

"Will you go, sir, or shall I?"

"O, I 'll go, my angel! You shall have it all your own way; only don't be so offish; because, as it is to be, it an't worth while, you know, to keep me a waiting forever."

The door was in his hand, and, seeing Violet make a ste-

towards one opposite which led to her sleeping-room, he went out. The next moment the bolt was shot, and Violet was alone, with this new terror and disgust. Alone, indeed; for from no one upon the beach, except from poor, powerless Mrs. Wild, could she hope for even sympathy. Her spirit quailed within her as she thought of being left, in her helpless weakness, to contend with the fierce, strong spirit of her father, and the cold, selfish brutality of this vain, unprincipled man. There was no comfort without her; there was only within her the still small voice, whispering, "Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart."

Her effort to decide on some plan of conduct for herself in these new circumstances was interrupted by an attempt to open her door, followed by a knock upon it. Violet sprang to it, exclaiming, nervously, "Who is there?"

"It 's me," was responded, in Katy's voice; and the door was opened immediately.

"Wot you all locked up for?" asked Katy, entering and seating herself.

"Because that vulgar man takes the liberty of walking into my room without permission, mother, and of forcing me to listen to his insolent speeches!"

"Hoity-toity! Wulgar man! an' insolent speech! An' ye 're Dick Wan Dyke the wrecker's darter, an' him the rich Mister Spriggins, wot 's got more 'an a hunder thousan' his pa made a sellin' ice cream, an' lef' it all ter him; an' he lives in a big house, an' is got his sarvants, an' his hosses, an' 'ill gie ye a carriage to drive in, an' them glass what-ye-call-'ems to wear, an' yer silks an' yer satins for every day in the year—"

"O, mother! what do I care for such things? I would rather, a thousand times rather,—if it be God's will,—lie at the bottom of the sea, than live in a palace with that man! O, mother! have mercy on me! I have tried to do my duty to you; I have never disobeyed you or my father;

but, O, I pray you, mother! have mercy on me in this thing, even as you hope that God will have mercy on you!"

The agony in her young face touched the heart of Katy, which, we may hope, had been somewhat quickened in its feelings by the example of this young life, so blameless and so earnest in its struggle to do right, or by the influence of those holy truths to which she had listened every day for those many weeks past. Her voice sounded more kindly as she said, "Well! well! only be civil to the man, an' don't take on so. Dick likes him, ye see, an' he 's mighty free with his money. But jist ye don't fret, now, an' come to dinner, and be cheerful, like; an' I 'll tell Dick to tell him he must n't be in no hurry, an' may be, by'm by, ye 'll come roun'."

"Never, mother, never! May God help me — for I see I have no other helper — and take me from such a doom to — "

"Now, don't you be a prayin' sich things, an' a tellin' Him that I treat ye badly; 'cause Mr. Merton said He hearn me wen I promised ter be kind ter ye, an' so I means to be."

"Then, mother, you will help me in this!"

"So I will; but, then, Dick an't so easy ter manage; so you must go quiet, an' git time; an' ef yer kin like 'im, arter all, it 'ill be as good as a thousan' dollar to me an' Dick. Now, ef 't was Mr. Duvo, I 'm a thinkin' yer would n't be so skeary. Mr. Duvo used to come here an' set wi' yer, an' I never hearn a word about wulgar an' insolent."

"I could not have used such words of Mr. Devereux; he was a gentleman," said Violet, while her heart gave a throb at the name, which sent the warm blood to crimson alike her white hands and her pale brow.

Katy was too much occupied by her words to remark her blushes.

"A gentleman!" she cried. "An' I wonder wot 'ill mek a gentleman, ef a hunder thousan' dollar won't!"

To debate this point with Katy would have been useless, as Violet well knew; and the interview ended with Katy's promise to do what she could with Dick, if Violet would come to dinner, and not "make him mad," to use Katy's expression, "by being too hard upon poor Mr. Spriggins."

Violet constrained herself to go to the table, but this was all she could do; she sat there in utter stillness, pretending to eat of the fish which Katy put upon her plate, yet scarcely swallowing a mouthful. It was well for her, perhaps, that Mrs. Wild was not at table to-day. Her looks of sympathy might have made self-command impossible.

"Why, Miss! don't you never eat no more? What a cheap wife you would make for a poor man!" said the facetious Mr. Spriggins.

"Why, Mr. Spriggins! yer an't a goin' ter begrudge yer wife the wittles wot she eats?" asked Katy.

"O, dear, no! certainly not. Mrs. Spriggins may eat the fat of the land. But Miss don't eat fat. Why, then, we'll do as well as Jack Sprat and his wife — he! he! he!"

"Yer too funny, Mr. Spriggins!" and Katy laughed loudly. "But — now, Mary — Wi'let — I say, wa' you goin'?" she exclaimed, as Violet arose.

"I must beg you to excuse me, mother; my head aches violently."

"Well, go 'long!" in a discontented tone; "but I'm a thinkin' headache an't all."

"An' I'm a thinkin'," added Dick, after watching Violet up stairs, and hearing the door of the upper saloon close on her, "ef yer don't mek that gal min', I'll ha' to take her in han'."

"Better give her to me; I'll manage her. It's all airs, you see. They all do so for a little while, just like a man that makes believe he don't care to sell a thing, just that he may get more for it. Now, you see, she thinks, if she holds out, I'll give the world and all for her; but I'm too cunning for that, you see, though she is the prettiest girl, by

all odds, I ever seen. I think I could make money on her, by and by, dressing her up and showing her, so much a sight."

"Now, do hush, Mr. Spriggins! Ef I thought you was a goin' to sarve her that way, you should n't never have her —that you should n't!" said Katy, earnestly.

"O! that was only fun, you know. I'll treat her like a princess or a presidentess; but, then, I don't like to be a waiting and waiting, and doing nothing. If you had a parson down here, we could soon settle it; but you must go to York, at last, you see, to be married."

"No, you need n't," interrupted Katy; "we can git the parson from Squam."

"But that's a great bother; and, before he got here, even if Miss had let you send for him, she might change her mind, and say no; and, may be, by the time you got her to say yes again, I might change my mind. Now, I tell you, the best way is, all go to the city. You can leave that Wild woman to see that the ship don't blow away!—ha! ha! ha!—Miss could be got aboard the sloop by telling her you was a going on a fishing-party, or something; and, once she was in York, I'd find plenty o' parsons that would come to the sloop and marry us, whether she said I will or I won't, for a five-dollar gold-piece."

"But, I say she shan't be married! an' no more she shan't, tell she says 'I will;' an' now, Mr. Spriggins, I tell you wot, you and Dick's too all in a hurry like—"

"Very well!" said Mr. Spriggins, sulkily. "If I don't suit you, I'll take my thousand dollars and go somewhere else for a wife. Many a girl—"

"O! I did n't mean that, Mr. Spriggins!—only jist for you to wait a bit—"

"Jist ye hush!" interrupted Dick, who had been quietly smoking during this conversation. "Come, Mr. Spriggins, —Abe Pindar an' me's a goin' a fishin', ef you've a mind to go 'long. It an't no use a stoppin' here a talkin' to the

women!" Then, as Mr. Spriggins rose and followed him from the cabin, he added, when out of Katy's hearing, "Yer see that gal's a spilin' Katy; she an't half the 'oman she was afore she come."

Perhaps it may be thought strange that, among the many painful feelings attendant on Violet's residence at the beach, no apprehension of danger to herself had ever arisen. This might have been, at first, from the belief that the child of Dick Van Dyke would be safe among his comrades, however rude and hard they might be; but this had now been succeeded by confidence in their kindly feelings to herself; for there was not one of these rough men who did not touch his hat, if he had one, or make some other sign of respectful greeting, when he met "the lady" who had taken such pains to teach his little girl, or had come to see his old mother when she was ill, or had given his wife such a pretty frock for the baby. Such acts of kindness were Violet's recreations,—her diversions, to use the word in its proper sense,—for they turned away her thoughts from herself, and her own painful environments. So, learning from Wild, one afternoon, that a little girl, who had been absent from school that day, was said to be ill, she set out, without any hesitation, to see her, though her home was more than a mile distant.

Bessie Ham was somewhat of a favorite with Violet. She was a curly-headed little thing, of some six years old,—rude and untaught, of course, yet affectionate. Violet found her with a high fever, and a hoarse cough. The little one's eyes brightened as she heard her voice; and the hot hand clung to Violet's, as if it found refreshment in her cool, soft touch.

"Bessie's rale glad to see you, Miss, she is!" said the child's mother. "She was a talkin' all last night, in the fever, 'bout the purty lady that gie'd her books, an' that tell'd her to be good."

To alleviate suffering as far as she could was the dictate

of Violet's nature; and she had been observant of all that, under Wild's skilful nursing, had seemed to accomplish this desirable end in the slight illnesses she had hitherto seen. She now asked for a bowl of water, and, taking her soft cambric handkerchief, she bathed the parched face and hands of the little sufferer; then, seating herself beside the rude bed, of straw spread on a box, and covered with a ragged quilt, she laid her cool, moist hand upon the child's brow, and soothed her with gentle words, telling her of Him who loves little children, and who, when he was on earth, took them in his arms and blessed them, and the touch of whose hand healed all their sicknesses. And so the burning eyes grew languid, the lids fell, and the regular heaving of the little chest told that the child slept; and Violet arose, and, promising the mother to call again the next day, went out from the close, dark, rudely-built cabin. She was a little startled to find that the sun had been so long below the horizon that the glow which had followed his setting was fast departing from the west. She walked rapidly on, starting at every sound, yet without any definable cause of fear. She had passed the few houses on her way, and there remained about a quarter of a mile of unbroken space between her and her home. She looked ahead with a palpitating heart; but there was nothing to be seen but the white sand, and the darker waves which broke upon it, uttering their never-ceasing monotone.

The sudden bark of a dog, making strange discord with this solemn sound, startled her, and caused her to quicken her rapid walk into a run. The quick fall of other steps upon the hard beach told her that she was pursued. She flew wildly, blindly on, with no consciousness but that of fear, no thought but that of escape.

"Stop, Miss!" cried the voice of Mr. Spriggins, panting with the exertion he was making. "Stop, Miss, and I'll see you home!" a proposition which certainly did not abate Violet's speed. The race continued till about a hundred

and fifty yards from her home, when a stout boy ran by her, saying, "Don't be feared, ma'am! I'll take care on him;" and she found herself, the next moment, breathless and trembling, in Wild's arms, who said that she had become a little anxious at her being out so late, and had come to look for her. The steps behind her ceased; but she did not feel quite easy, even under Wild's protection, till she was again in her own apartment, with the door bolted behind her. To avoid the necessity of going down to tea, she went to bed at once, bidding Wild say that she was not well — an excuse which she might make with but too much truth. After tea, Wild came up again, and, finding Violet awake, told, with evident enjoyment, that Mr. Spriggins had come in, very much "*flustered*" with drink, and with his clothes covered with wet sand. "And, Miss Violet, what do you think? — he said you set a man on to trip him up. I do believe that boy tripped him up! I think it was right smart of him, if he did."

"Of what boy are you speaking, Wild?" asked Violet.

"Did n't you see a boy, ma'am, as passed you on the beach, just before you met me?"

"Yes, I remember now, I did; and he spoke to me in passing. But who is he, Wild? Does he belong to the beach?"

"No, ma'am, that he don't, I'm sure; but who he is I don't know. I never saw him until this evening."

"Is it not strange that he should have acted as he did? Did he speak to you, Wild?"

"Yes, ma'am; 't was just as I came in sight of you running, and him — that Mr. Spriggins, I mean — after you; and I was a little frightened, ma'am, and I says, says I, 'O, laws o' mercy! it's my young lady!' and this boy he comes up behind me, sudden like, just as if he ris up out of the sea, and he says, quite comforting like, says he, 'Don't be frightened; he shan't touch the lady;' and, with that, he

run by, and I shall always think it was very civil in him to trip up that Mr. Spriggins."

Violet lay quite still, making no comment on Wild's somewhat singular idea of civility, till, supposing her to be asleep, the good woman stole quietly out, taking off her shoes lest she should make a noise, and went to her own bed in an adjoining room. There Violet could hear her moving about for a while, and could see the light gleaming through a chink in the thin partition. Soon the light was extinguished, and all was still. She still waited a few minutes, and then, slipping out of bed, she felt her way cautiously and noiselessly into the outer and larger room, or saloon, and carefully raised the sash. Yes, there they were, her beautiful flowers, — those mute pledges of regard and interest; and the boy who had rendered her a service so important this evening was the messenger by whom they were sent. She had suspected it while Wild was speaking, and now she felt assured of it. How inexpressibly soothing was this new proof that she was thus remembered, thus cared for! She had felt so lonely, so forgotten, but an hour before! Ah, faithless soul! were you not even then cared for, protected, guided, by Infinite Love?

The next morning, Violet rose early, and, accompanied by Wild, — she could not venture alone again, — went to see how little Bessie was. The child had been ill all night, "talking all sorts o' things," the mother said, with troubled eye. She had fallen into a disturbed sleep toward morning. "But, O, ma'am!" continued the poor woman, pleadingly, to Violet, "if you could only stay till she woke! She 'll kill herself a cryin', when she finds out ye 've been here, an' she an't seed yer!"

Violet did not hesitate a moment to grant this request. There was something in Wild's face, as she looked at the child and listened to its breathings, which told Violet that she apprehended danger; and she determined that the mother should not be left alone. Accordingly, Wild re-

turned, by her request, to let Katy know where she was, and to bring such medicines, or articles suited to the nourishment of the patient, as the good housekeeper's own stores supplied. And through all that day, and the succeeding night, Violet watched beside the pallet where death was doing his dread work. Little Bessie was the only daughter in her humble home. There were two other children, but they were sons; and Violet was deeply touched by the grief of the parents, but especially of the stern, weather-beaten father, over this pet lamb. On a bed which Mrs. Wild's care had made clean and comfortable lay the child, far more lovely than in health; her face flushed, and her eyes bright with fever, muttering incoherent sentences, in which "the lady" could often be heard. There were times when she seemed to listen, if Violet spoke; but there was no recognition in her eye when it rested on her, or even on her mother or father. Poor man! this seemed the bitterest pang of all to him.

"O, ma'am, my little Bessie don't know me!" he would say, piteously, to Violet, after standing long beside the pallet, trying to win from his darling some word or look of consciousness.

At one time he brought in his hands all the little trifles she had prized in life, — bits of china, pebbles, blocks of wood, and a rag baby, and two small picture-books that had been Violet's gifts. One by one he held these before her eyes, trying to call her attention, by an unnaturally gay voice and manner, and such words as, "See, Bessie, jis' look, the purty chany! An' sich a purty stone as daddy got for Bessie! — Don't Bessie want to know wha' he f'und it?" Then the smile which he had constrained his dark, heavy features to wear would vanish, and his voice would be piteously sad, as he turned to Violet to say, "O, Miss, she don't hear me!" and again, with renewed hope, he would dance the baby before her, or show the pictures in the book. At one time, Violet, thinking that the associa-

tion between her voice and the books she had read to the child might help her failing sense, took one of them, and, opening to a picture of the Saviour carrying a child in his arms, said, "Does Bessie know the good Shepherd?" The child's eye was turned on her, and she repeated the question slowly and distinctly.

"Good Shepherd — love Bessie!" muttered the child; and then the but half-recovered thread of thought seemed lost again. And so, in vain efforts and vainer hopes, day faded into night, and night brightened again into day. The east was glowing with the light of the coming sun. It fell through the open, unsashed window upon the little pallet. The child, who had been more quiet for the last hour, suddenly opened her eyes; — her father and mother were both bending over her, and — joy! joy! — she knew them; they were sure of it even before she spoke, and, with smiles on their wearied faces, they turned to Violet and Mrs. Wild. Violet smiled, too, for she had little experience of such scenes; but Mrs. Wild shook her head sadly, and they turned with renewed fear to the child. Her face had changed greatly even in that moment of time.

"O, ma'am!" cried the father, "can't yer say a bit prayer for her? They say yer so good, may be God mought hear yer."

It was no time for the indulgence, or even for the remembrance, of girlish diffidence; and Violet sank on her knees beside the dying child, and prayed, in words which seemed given her from above, for her and for those who had given her being. When the words of prayer ceased, all were silent for a moment, — all watching that little panting form.

"Daddy — mammy!" said a feeble, gasping voice, while the little hand, with trembling, uncertain movement, tried to lift itself to the face, first of one and then of the other, "good Shepherd tek Bessie up — up — tell lady!"

They were her last words. She was with the good Shep-

herd when they were ended; and, in that conviction, Violet rejoiced with exceeding joy, even while she wept with the parents.

But long weeping is a luxury denied to the poor; and very soon the mother was bustling about to get something for her two remaining children to eat, and the father was nailing together a rude box for Bessie's last resting-place. All that Violet could do for her little friend had been done. The spotless shroud had been made by her own hands, from one of her cambric night-gowns; and while Wild put it on, Violet selected some of the simplest white flowers from her last bouquet, which she had brought with her, hoping that it would please the sick child, and laid them in the little hands folded so meekly on her bosom. Nothing that she had done won more grateful feeling from the parents than these last kindnesses.

"Bessie always loved flowers," said the mother, as her tears fell upon the little face over which she bent, "an' it was very good in you to think on it, Miss!"

The father said nothing; but, after a long, long look at his darling, his eyes sought Violet's face with such an expression of reverent and grateful devotion as the face of a worshipper at some holy shrine might wear.

"When will you have the funeral?" asked Wild, in those subdued tones which mark our sympathy with sorrow.

"The buryin'? O, not tell this evenin'!" said the mother, bending again to kiss the face so soon to be hid from her forever.

"Have you sent for a clergyman?" asked Violet, with some surprise at the shortness of the preparation.

"Fur wot?" asked the mother.

"The minister," said Wild.

"O, it's the parson ye mean. Sure, we don't have none."

"No funeral service! Bury people without a prayer?"

cried Wild, shocked and indignant. "Why, we would n't do that by the child of a beggar, in my country!"

Violet saw the father's face flush, and she hastened to say, "What we have been accustomed to see makes such a difference in our feelings; — but, I acknowledge I could not bear to see our little Bessie laid in the earth without some holy words, — something that would mark that we believed we were burying one who would rise again, and whom we hoped to meet in a glorious immortality; and, if there is any expense," she added, lowering her voice, and drawing near to the father, "I should be very glad —"

"No, no, Miss, there an't none; an' I 'll go myself an' bring the parson, an' ye 'll jist no blame Clary an' me that we did n't know no better."

The clergyman came. He was of the Presbyterian church, — the only one in the little collection of fishing-huts at the head of the beach, which had received the name of Manasquam, — a calm, grave man, who could sympathize with sorrow, having himself been chastened. He won a hearing from the parents by the tenderness with which he looked upon the face of the child.

"She was a lovely little one," he said; then, observing, with some surprise, the little book, the last thing she had noticed, which her father had laid in the coffin to be buried with her, — "Did she read?"

"No, sir; but she loved to hear of the good Shepherd," said Violet, to whom he had addressed his question. And so the preacher, in the few remarks he made, spoke of her as one who loved the Saviour, and was gathered early and safely into his fold; and he urged those from whom she had been taken so to live that they might hope again to meet her in the kingdom of heaven. These remarks were made in the little cabin; and then all, women as well as men, followed the little coffin to the rude grave-yard, of which we have before spoken. The grave had been already dug; the coffin was deposited in it, and, after a prayer, the

earth was heaped upon it, and the people separated, leaving little Bessie's body to rest there till the resurrection morning.

It was the first time Violet had been in this grave-yard; and, lingering behind the others, with her mother and Wild, she looked with interest upon the graves around her. Here death appeared in all his bald, bare desolation. No gentle hand, no loving heart, had adorned the last resting-place of the departed, seeming still by this fond care to link them to their lives. One grave only bore a name. At the head of one hillock was an unpainted board, on which had been rudely carved the letters, Mrs. George Rex. Violet read them with surprise. "Who was this, mother?" she asked of Katy. Katy pretended not to hear, and she repeated the question.

"O, jist a 'oman, Wi'let."

"One who lived on the beach? It is such a strange name!" she added, as if giving a reason for her inquiry.

"Well, that was the name on her box o' close; that 's all we knowed."

"Then she did not live here?"

"No; Dick f'und her in a ship wot comed ashore. But come, Wi'let — 't an't no use talkin' — I want ter git home; an', I kin tell you, Dick an' Mr. Spriggins is mad enough — "

"But, mother, only tell me about this poor stranger — was she young?"

"Wot ye want ter know for? 'T an't nothin' to you!"

"O, yes, mother! It is something to us all; for we all must die, as she did. Come, I will not keep you: we will go home together, and you will tell me, as we go, all about this poor woman with the strange name." And Violet coaxingly drew Katy's hand through her arm, and walked beside her out of the grave-yard, followed by Wild.

"Well, there an't much to tell," said Katy. "Dick f'und her dead, as I tell'd yer; an' we had a 'Piscopal over from

Barnegat, an' he buried her, with the book, an' gown, an' all; and Dick took the name off o' her box, an' got a man to Squam to cut it, so her people could know her ef they ever comed here."

"But how did she look? You have not told me about her."

"I don't see wot you're so curous for. Did anybody talk 'bout her to ye?"

"No, never — only the strange name made me first inquire; but now I want to hear more especially how she looked."

"Well, she was a young 'oman. I don't think she was more an' twenty, ef she was so much; an' she was purty, an' had little soft hands an' feet, as ef she never worked much, nor walked much, nara one."

"Poor thing! And was she alone? Was no one in the ship that could tell who she was?"

"No, them was all gone; some, I s'pose, in the boats, an' some washed off the decks. An' now you need n't ax me no more; for I an't got nothin' more to tell."

Violet walked on in silence, her thoughts full of the nameless stranger; for she at once conjectured the meaning of the George Rex which marked her grave. Suddenly she turned to Katy, whose thoughts had wandered to a very different subject, and asked, "What made you put Mrs. on her grave, if she was so young? How did you know she was married?"

Taken by surprise, Katy answered, heedlessly, "O! we knowed that by the baby. Besides ——"

"And was there a baby?" Violet exclaimed, eagerly. "O, mother! what became of it?"

"Why, Wi'let, wot you in sich a trimble for? I tell'd ye them was all dead; an' now I an't a goin' to say nothin' more."

But Violet thought much more of the young mother and her babe. Where was this ship coming from? When was

it thus lost? Had any relics of mother and child been preserved? Such were some of the questions she would have asked; but Katy obstinately refused to converse any farther.

"An' you better not be a axin' sich questions o' other people down here; for, ye see, we wreckers don't love people to talk 'bout the ships wot comes ashore; 'cause, ye see, them might mek trouble out o' it."

Violet, wearied by the watching of the last night, and the excitement of the day, asked and obtained Katy's permission to retire immediately to rest. She was followed by Wild, who always insisted upon acting the part of her *femme de chambre.* One of the first things that Violet did was to examine the vase of flowers which Wild had sent home.

"Do you think, Wild, that these geraniums and that piece of ivy would grow? I should like so much to plant them over that grave — the stranger's grave, I mean," she said.

Instead of answering her question, Wild, dropping the shawl which she had taken from Violet's shoulders, and was slowly folding, clasped her hands together, exclaiming, "O, Miss Violet! I can't help it! I'm a'most afraid to say it, but I can't help it — suppose this should be my own dear mistress — and you should be —"

"Hush, hush, Wild! — don't say that! All died — all, Wild. Father in heaven, deliver me from temptation!" And, trembling in every limb, the poor, weary child sank upon a chair, with only strength to pray.

"You're right, my dear Miss Violet; we won't talk about it any more — at least, not just now," said Wild, frightened at the effect upon Violet, yet determining in her own mind that Capt. Ross should know her suspicions, if she had to go to Ross Hall to tell them.

It was long before Violet could even seem composed, and, till sleep had completely overpowered her weary senses,

a thrill would occasionally run through her frame, as the thought of Wild's suggestion flashed again upon her, to be again struggled against as a temptation to think dishonoringly of her parents, and slightingly of her present duties. In the morning she slept late, and was not sorry to find that Dick and Mr. Spriggins had breakfasted before she went down. Nor was her satisfaction diminished when she heard from Katy that they were getting the sloop ready to go to the city, and were even then on board, though she thought it probable they would come to the house before they sailed. Anxious to avoid them, feeling that she might now hope to be secure from interruption, Violet, as soon as she arose from table, proposed to Mrs. Wild to go with her and set out the ivy and geraniums. They had arrived at the grave-yard before it occurred either to Mrs. Wild or herself that no plant would grow in the arid sand of the beach. Violet expressed great regret at the disappointment. "Do you not think," she asked, "that we might get some better soil from the edge of the lagoon? Suppose we walk there and see."

"It 's too far for you in this hot sun, Miss Violet — you look pale already; but I will go and ask Mr. Ham to get us some, if you 'll go home with the flowers now; and we can come this evening, when it 's cool, and set them out."

"But I do not think I ought to let you go, Wild; it will be a long walk for you."

"Not a bit, Miss Violet, — not a bit. I walk so fast, I shall be back, at home, a'most as soon as you are."

And so the matter was arranged, and they set out in opposite directions at the same time. Violet walked slowly, for she thought she could see, over one of the little sand-heaps, bordering the lagoon, the top of the sloop's mast. If so, it was still at its anchorage, and she would rather not go home until it had sailed. She began to regret her loitering, however, when she saw the figure of a man ad-

vance from behind this very sand-heap towards her. He came with long strides, which told her, even before she could see his face, that it was her father. She quickened her steps, hoping at least to get near home and have the shield of her mother's presence, before she met him. But she had scarce gone ten steps before he was within hail, and his voice bade her to stop. She dared not disobey, and, comforting herself that this was at least better than meeting Mr. Spriggins, she stood still, awaiting his coming. When he found this, he slackened his pace, and came up to her very deliberately. Violet waited for him to speak.

"I think you might say good-mornin', when you han't seed me for three days!" was his not very agreeable commencement.

"I beg your pardon, father, — I thought you had something to say to me."

"An' so I has somethin' ter say ter ye! I has ter say that I think yer great friends, that sot you up so, mought ha' taught ye manners!"

"Father, I have never intended to be disrespectful to you."

"Love me, love my dog. I'd jis as lieve ye'd be disrespec'ful to me, as to my friend."

"I have never been disrespectful to your friends, father."

"Yer calls it respec'ful, does you, to run away from a gintleman when he wants to walk with you?"

"I should never run from a gentleman, father, for no gentleman would give me any cause of fear. I am sorry to speak so of any one whom you like; and even now, father, if Mr. Spriggins will let me alone, I will try, for your sake, to forget his impertinence, and to treat him with civility."

Dick looked at Violet with astonishment. Ignorant himself of the power of conscience, he had attributed the submissiveness she had hitherto shown to his demands to fear, and had never anticipated any serious resistance to his will,

when once he should arouse himself to make it known to her, unless she should be supported in that resistance by others. It was to avoid even the modified encouragement she might receive from Katy that he had seized this opportunity of meeting her alone; and he had come determined, to use his own language to Mr. Spriggins, "not to ha' no nonsense." They were going to New York, as Katy had said; and what better time than the present could there be for accomplishing their object? As to Violet's objections, with which Katy had, to do her justice, endeavored to impress him, he believed, with Mr. Spriggins, that they were only "make-believe;" and, if they were real, what difference could they make?—she would soon lay them aside when she found he was determined, and well she might; for his part, he thought it was only "too good for her," to become the wife of such a pleasant gentleman as Mr. Spriggins, who was worth a hundred thousand dollars; he supposed she would be more "sot up" than ever. And now this timid girl stood before him, very pale, it is true, but very firm, and offered conditions on which she would be civil to his friend,—"if he would let her alone."

"An' s'pose he don't mean to let yer 'lone? an' s'pose I mean yer to marry him?—What, then?"

"It is a supposition I cannot make, father; the very thought is dishonoring to me."

"Well, you need n't s'pose; but ye 'll jis' do it easy when the time comes; an' that 's now."

"Never, father, never! Though you should strike me dead at your feet, I say, never!"

It seemed very strange, very incomprehensible, to Dick. There was fear at her heart and in her eye; but through the fear—not subduing it, but triumphing over it—was a steadfast resolve, which gave to her pale face a wonderful likeness in expression to one which Dick had somewhere seen, though he could not remember to whose.

"Well, it's easy talkin'," he said, in reply; "but we 'll

see. Now, ye'll jist go ahead, that way;" and he pointed in the direction from which he had come.

His stolid face underwent no change, showed no emotion. Why should he be moved at the opposition of a feeble girl, and one so completely in his power? It is precisely this quiet consciousness of power which man, cultivated or uncultivated, often exhibits, that most deeply impresses a woman, and for the reason that it lies beyond the compass of her experience. She can never attain to it, she cannot measure it; it partakes of the incomprehensible — the mysterious. And now, as Violet looked at that unmoved face before her, as changeless in expression as the stone at her feet, her heart fainted within her, and she was again all the girl.

"O, father!" she cried, "do not speak so to me! You know I have never disobeyed you; but I cannot do this thing; it would be to sin against God, and against my own soul! O father! you could not be so cruel ——"

"Cruel!" interrupted Dick. "It's cruel, ye call it, to make a lady on ye, with a house like a king's, an' hosses, an' carriage, an' sarvants, an' all!"

"And a vulgar, bad man, whom I detest!" cried Violet, with more passion than she had yet shown. "Father, if your power over me is to be used for such a purpose, I shall think it perfectly right to resist it, or even to appeal to those who can protect me from it."

"Yer will, will yer? An' I'll like to know what them 'ill do ter git you fro' that!"

He seized her arm in his vice-like clasp. The pressure on the delicate muscles was acutely painful; the blood flushed her brow at one instant, and left her whole face as white as alabaster at the next. But she did not utter a sound. She could suffer and be still;—in this lay her woman's power.

"Can them git yer away fro' that? I ax," repeated Dick.

"Not by their own power, perhaps; but there is such a

thing as law!" The words came low, but steadfast, from pale lips that scarcely moved in uttering them; and the eyes, gleaming from her white face, fixed themselves firmly on the fierce orbs that looked down into them. Dick's face grew black with murderous passion, and his disengaged arm was lifted for a blow that might have done murder, had it fallen; but it was arrested. Mr. Spriggins had become impatient; and fearing, from the delay, that his coadjutor needed help, he had crept up silently to him, and now, catching his upraised arm in both his hands, he cried, "Now, don't, my good friend! That would ha' been a smasher; 't would ha' sp'iled Miss Wi'let's beauty; an' then, you know, the article would n't ha' been salable. Ha! ha! ha!"

"Father, you will not let this man speak so contemptuously of *your* child!" said Violet; for, strange to say, she almost forgot her dread of Dick in her indignation at the tone assumed by Mr. Spriggins.

Dick only glowered on her; but Mr. Spriggins, with a mixture of gayety and petulance, exclaimed, "Why, you ungrateful, obstinate little thing! If you was n't such a beauty, I 'd give you up. Here I 've gone and broke my promise to my friend Dick, and followed him up here, because I thought he looked rather glum, and I know he an't to be trusted when he 's in a passion; and now, when I 've saved you from being knocked to shivers, you look as if you was ready to cut me in two! But you an't a going to have everything your own way. You can't run now; and I 'm a going to have a walk with you this morning, whether you will or no! So, come, my beauty!"

Dick still held Violet's arm, though in a less vice-like clasp, and Mr. Spriggins, while he spoke, taking her other hand and passing her arm through his, the two men, as by some preconcerted arrangement, began to draw her away towards the lagoon, on whose quiet waters, close to the shore, lay the little sloop. She saw not whither they were bearing her; she understood not, she scarcely heard his

words. It was the expression of faces brutal with passion, as they drew her forcibly on, in spite of her resistance, which made her shriek, in a frenzy of fear, "Wild! Wild! Mother! Mother!"

There was no answer. She was already too far away to be heard, and the distance is every moment increasing. Is there none to deliver? — no help? no hope? She grows faint with sickening dread, while Mr. Spriggins gazes impudently in her face, and laughs with unmanly exultation. But what is this that comes between them and the lagoon? They gnash their teeth with rage, and her failing faculties rouse themselves to see the kindly face of Dr. Jamieson looking from a buggy driven by a stout son of Erin, and to hear the doctor exclaim, as he descends from his somewhat uncomfortable perch, "Stop, there! stop, there! Why, Dick, man, what 's the meaning of all this?"

Under ordinary circumstances, Dick would have little heeded the remonstrances of Dr. Jamieson, though backed by the stoutest Irishman that ever set foot on earth; but he was now engaged in something that transcended even his extensive circle of crime, — something which he had been afraid to tell even to Katy. The greed of gain had tempted him into an action that was as cowardly as it was wicked, having nothing in it of the wild daring that might, to his untutored mind, have shed a gleam of light upon the darkness of his past life. To spread the snare for the great ship, over whose safety many watched; to do this so adroitly that the most experienced should be deceived, and should rush headlong on their fate; to watch her as she came on, on, unconscious to the last; or, more exciting still, to mark, with doubtful and hungry eyes, the vain efforts to escape of those aroused too late; to plough his way through raging billows, when others, perchance, hung back; to save, it might be, some few half-drowned wretches, the small remains of a goodly crew, and then to seize upon the rich cargo; — in all this there was something of manly

daring; and, so far from being humiliated at the discovery of his being engaged in such scenes, Dick would probably have been more disposed to boast of it, had there been no fear of the boast endangering his gains.

But, to carry off a poor, screaming, half-fainting girl! — it had made Dick cowardly, even of Katy, from whom Violet must be separated before he would permit Mr. Spriggins to attempt the abduction planned last night. And now here was a man before him, and the last man he would have desired to see at the present moment; for Dick respected Dr. Jamieson, who had been kind both to Katy and himself in illness. Had it been Capt. Ross, Dick would have delighted in carrying off this, his petted darling, even from his very arms, and in giving before his eyes to the arms of another her whom he had designed for his son. Even Mr. Devereux's opposition would only have inflamed his determination; for Mr. Devereux had not always concealed his contempt of Dick. But before the calm, manly, yet good-natured Dr. Jamieson, Dick positively stood abashed. He released Violet's arm, and, bursting from the astonished Mr. Spriggins, she threw herself upon Dr. Jamieson, crying, wildly, "O, save me, Dr. Jamieson! save me!"

"Poor thing! poor thing! so I will," said the friendly doctor, supporting her on his arm; "but, Dick, my man, what does it all mean?"

"Why, it mean that I an't a goin' ter let that gal o' mine have her own way in everything!" said Dick, trying to recover himself, and to put a bold face on the matter.

"And who is this?" asked Dr. Jamieson, as he turned his attention on Mr. Spriggins, who had kept as much as possible in the background, a little awed by Dr. Jamieson's well-known name and position. "Is he helping you to prevent the poor child's having her own way?"

"He's the b'y that she's promised to; and she's a goin' to marry him, too, Dr. Jimersen!"

Dick advanced to Dr. Jamieson somewhat pugnaciously,

as he spoke. Nothing would have given him so much pleasure as a fight just at that moment, for nothing would have done so much to restore his self-confidence. But Dr. Jamieson was not the man to afford him this satisfaction. With a quietness that was almost amusing, he said, "You will not insist on her being married this morning, I hope, Dick; because, as you see, she has fainted."

As Dr. Jamieson spoke, he lowered his arm, and showed the death-like face that lay upon it. Her bonnĕt, which had been left untied, had fallen off, and now her comb dropped from her head, and her long hair trailed on the sands. Why was it that Dick, who had not shrunk from the dead mother herself, shrank from this vivid likeness of her as he had seen her first?

"She han't gone and died?" said Mr. Spriggins, frightened out of his unusual reserve by the appearance of her whom he regarded as his property.

Dr. Jamieson gave him quite a new view of the affair, and one not at all less interesting to him. Looking at him with what seemed compassionate gravity, the doctor said, "While that question remains doubtful, sir, would it not be wise for you to take yourself out of the way? — as it might become my painful duty to inform against you as accessory to the murder."

Mr. Spriggins lost some of his rubicund color while the doctor spoke, and scarcely paused to thank him for the suggestion, and to assure him that he had not meant to hurt the young lady, when he drew Dick aside, to insist on his going on board the sloop with him, and sailing immediately for New York. Dick had no fears of Violet's death; he had heard Dr. Jamieson say that she had fainted; but he really did not care to face Katy just at present, and he would rather avoid any further catechism from Dr. Jamieson; so, yielding to what he nevertheless considered the very silly cowardice of his companion, he went on board the sloop with him, and, having induced two of his comrades to

join him, with lines and bait for fishing, they dropped down to the mouth of the lagoon, and were soon in deep water, and proceeding with a fair wind to New York.

Dr. Jamieson, having lifted Violet into the buggy, and seated her so that her head would rest against his knee, bade the driver to proceed. The motion of the carriage aroused her even before she reached home. It was piteous to see the look of terror which she cast on her companion when first her eyes opened; but she grew calm, and let her head fall again on its resting-place, with a weary sigh, as she met the kind face and heard the friendly voice, saying, "Be quiet, my dear child! You are quite safe, you know, with me."

Mrs. Wild was just approaching the house as they drove up, and she hastened, with many exclamations of wonder and sorrow, to assist Dr. Jamieson in lifting Violet out of the buggy; and, spite of her repeated assurances that she could walk now, in bearing her into Katy's cabin. As they approached this, a man's voice was heard speaking, and Violet, with a quick, startled movement, clung to the arm with which Dr. Jamieson was supporting her.

"Don't be frightened, my child!" said the doctor; yet he checked his steps, unwilling that she should see either of the men who had agitated her so terribly.

"It 's only Mr. Ham, little Bessie's father, ma'am," said Wild, and they proceeded.

The words they had heard were, "I would n't like ter bre'k my word, an' I know, ef I do, yer man 'ill be like ter kill me; but, I tell yer, I won't ha' no harm happen her. I swore that on my dead Bessie's coffin, an' I 'll keep it!"

"An' who the divil 's a goin' ter do her any harm d' ye think? I 'most begin to wish she never been come here. I b'lieve she ha' 'witched you all, — I do!"

"She ha' been good to us all; an' to yer, too, Miss Van Dyke! I 've yearn yer say so."

"Well, I did n't say nothin' agin it. But, laws sake!

Dr. Jimerson, whar, under the sun an' arth, you come from, an' a bringin' Wi'let, lookin' as if she seen a ghost? Wi'let, wot 's the matter wid ye now?" The last question was asked in Katy's sharpest and most reproachful tone. To judge from it, one would have supposed Violet a perpetual complainer.

Dr. Jamieson had laid her down on Katy's couch, which, since it had been covered with a pretty chintz by Violet, was the very pride of her heart. She tried to rise, at her mother's address; but Dr. Jamieson put his hand upon her, saying, "Lie still, my dear! I will answer all questions for you to-day. And so, friend Katy," and the good doctor, seating himself in a large arm-chair, turned his full, pleasant face on Katy, "to begin where you began, I came from New York."

"I knowed that afore; but how you come so soon in the mornin',— an' I did n't 'spec' you tell duck-shootin'; that 's yer time, ye know."

"Excuse me, my good friend, it is always my time to see the sick; and I came now to see Violet, by the request of Captain Ross, who wrote me that she greatly needed my aid."

"I wonder how the cap'in knowed: he an't seed her this ever so long."

"Perhaps he heard that she was ill." — "I reckon that 's some o' yer work, Miss Wile," Katy interjected. But the doctor, without heeding her, went on. — "However that may be, he never wrote truer words. Now, Katy, my good friend, what is your belief about the doctrine of a particular providence?" and, putting on his spectacles, Dr. Jamieson peered up in Katy's face with all the gravity of one awaiting an oracular response.

"Do, doctor, hush yer nonsinse!" cried Katy.

"Nonsense, do you say? Well, let me tell you, I am beginning to have a very firm belief in it as excellent sense. If that letter had not been written to Captain Ross, and if

I had not received his, urging me to come here immediately, just in time for me to take the last evening's boat, and to come over from Shrewsbury this morning, — ay, if there had been but a half-hour's difference in my coming, earlier or later, — that poor child would have been carried — " He paused, and looked sternly on Katy; then added, "You may know where; I don't, except that I will venture to say it would not have been on the road to heaven."

The doctor paused and folded his arms, observing Katy with a shrewd, penetrating look.

"Dr. Jimerson, yer enough ter mek Job swear! Miss Wile, can't yer tell me wot 's the matter wid Wi'let?" asked Katy, standing before them, with her hands resting on her hips, and looking impatiently from one to the other.

"No," said Dr. Jamieson, making a sign to Mrs. Wild: "she knows nothing; and I have told you all I know, except that the persons who were carrying her were my old acquaintance Dick — I was sorry to see him about such business — and a flashy young man from the city."

"It 's Mr. Spriggins: don't ye know him? Why, he 's got a hunder thousand dollar!"

"And so you sold your daughter to him! Katy, I would not have believed it of you. Poor child! poor child!" and Dr. Jamieson looked really distressed.

Katy's color rose, probably with a mingling of shame and anger, as she said, "I don't see wot ye say that for! He promised, wen Wi'let was married ter him, she 'd ha' all sorts o' things."

"Married to him! Nonsense, Katy! I did n't think you could be made a fool of so easily; and, if he had married her, you 'd soon have found that all his gold was like that great chain he wears — brass gilt, Katy, brass gilt. You, that have seen gentlemen, not to know what he was!"

"I tell ye wot, Dr. Jimerson, there 's all sorts o' gintlemin, an' some on them an't no great things; but wot I

want ter know is, wot was Mr. Spriggins an' Dick Wan Dyke a doin' wid Wi'let? Whar was they a carryin' you?"

"How does she know?" cried Dr. Jamieson, interrupting Violet's attempt to speak. "I tell you, they were carrying her to the devil! The first stage on the journey was that sloop which I see just passing."

Katy turned and looked in the direction indicated by the doctor, and there, sure enough, was the sloop, its white sails spread, bending to the western breeze. She turned back to exclaim, angrily, "That 's the first time, sence I was Dick Wan Dyke's 'oman, that he tried ter do anything onderhanded ter me! I right glad yer ketched him, Dr. Jimerson! I reckon he 'll think Katy an't no fool, arter all! I tell'd him Spriggins was too hurryin' like; now he 'll b'lieve me." And Katy laughed — a laugh half of bitterness that Dick should attempt to act without her counsel, half of pleasure that he had failed in that attempt.

"Perhaps so; and, in the mean time, to prevent any more such attempts as that of this morning, I shall take this child away with me."

Dr. Jamieson spoke with such determination, so like a man who could and would do as he said, that Katy was bewildered, and knew not what to answer.

"If my mother will give her consent," said Violet.

The low-breathed words restored Katy's spirit. Her resolution was taken and announced. "I an't a goin' ter do no sich a thing; an' I think it 's wery hard for Wi'let ter be a wantin' ter go, wen I been jist as good ter her as I knowed how ter be!"

"Mother," said a voice, low, but so impressive that every other was hushed, in the desire to hear, "I am willing to give you my life. My only hope, when I came here, was to be permitted to do you and those who are around you good. O, dear mother!" and Violet, strong in the excitement of the moment, rose from her reclining posture, and, with flushed cheeks and brightening eyes, continued:

"There were times when I would have thought it little to die that you and — and — my father" — the words came low and gaspingly — "might live forever. I thought that God had sent me away to learn his blessed truth, that I might bring it back to you. Only two days ago, when I saw the good Shepherd take home a little lamb whom I might dare to hope that I had been so blessed as to lead to him, my heart swelled with such joy as I had never known before. But, mother, you will not let me live for such things; you will not let me live here at all in peace. You — no, not you, mother, not you," — and her voice softened into a tenderness that seemed to entreat pardon for the charge, — "not you, but — but — my father, will sell me — sell me to shame and misery, as if I were a dumb animal. The wild beasts have been chased from their prey for a moment; but you know, or you would know if you had looked into the eyes that glared on me this morning," — the poor girl shivered and closed her eyes, as if to shut out their very memory, — "you would know that they will come back again; and, when Dr. Jamieson, whom God sent to me this morning, shall have left me, can I hope that another protector will be sent to me? If you bid me, I must stay; but, O, mother! I shall go mad with terror before the trial comes, if you keep me; but have mercy on me, and let me go, mother, and I will work as never slave worked for a taskmaster, and all I make shall be yours!"

Her clasped hands were uplifted to Katy. Her tears were flowing fast.

Ben Ham, who had stood back near the door, pressed forward, saying, "Miss Van Dyke ——"

"Hush yer mouth, Ben Ham!" cried Katy, impatiently. "Wi'let, ef I let ye go wid Dr. Jimersen, ye 'll promise me ye 'll never marry Edward Ross?"

"Never, mother! I never wished to marry Edward, nor he me."

"An' yet ye 'd a'most did it. But t 'was the cap'in,

an' may be he 'll do it agin. Ye must promise ye won't go ter him till Edward 's done married."

"But, ef the lady wants ter marry him, Miss Wan Dyke," began Ben Ham, quite ignorant of the discovery that Katy had made respecting Violet's real parentage; but Violet said gently to him, "I do not wish it;" and Katy exclaimed, angrily, "Let me 'lone, Ben: ye don' know nothin' 'bout it! Will ye promise, Wi'let?"

"Certainly, mother, though it will be very hard not to see dear Papa Ross. May he not come and see me?"

"Well, ef he don't bring Edward, an' don't try ter mek yer marry him."

"You need have no fear of that, mother; but I will promise all you ask."

"But ye must promise on the good book;" and, bringing a Bible which Violet had always kept on the table in this room, Katy made Violet put her hand on it, and repeat the words of the promise she exacted — that she would never marry Edward Ross; that she would not even go to his father's while he remained unmarried; and that she would not permit any one to speak to her of marriage with him.

"An' now," Katy said, as she laid the book down, "ye better go ter-day: ef Dick fin' yer here, ye won' git off so easy."

"But, mother, will he not be very angry with you?" asked Violet, forgetting herself, for a moment, in her fear of danger to Katy.

"Ye may say that same; but I 've seed him mad afore; an' I 'll jist say I could n't help it, an' that 's as true as the good book, for no more I could n't; an' I kin say I 'm sorry enough, too, that I am to part wid yer."

"And, mother, I am sorry to leave you, and I wish you would promise me to let some of my children, who can read, come sometimes and read a chapter of the Bible for you; it will keep them from forgetting what they have learned."

"Yes; an' do the old mammy good, too, ye think! Well, may be it will!"

"And, may be, Mr. Ham, you and Mrs. Ham would let them come sometimes and read to you about the good Saviour, that Bessie loved?"

"Ay, ay, Miss, so we will! An' the good parson, when I druv him home, promised to come sometimes an' tell us wot we must do; an' some on us 'ill year him right glad, we will."

"O, Mr. Ham! you have made me very happy!" and Violet grasped his rough hand, while sobs burst from her full heart, and she turned aside her head to offer her silent, blissful thanksgiving to Him who had given her so rich a crown for her cross.

With what ready hands Mrs. Wild packed Violet's trunks and her own, with what an unaffectedly joyous face she said "good-bye" to the beach and all upon it, we need not say, for the reader will easily divine for himself. To Violet it was not all joy. The tears she shed at parting with Katy were genuine expressions of affection and regret.

"And, mother," she said, "I will come to you whenever you are ill, if my father will only let me be here in peace; and, remember, I am your child always, to work for you, and to help you in every way I can."

"You 're a good child; I know that! Well, one o' these days ye 'll be all the better, may be, for bein' good to the old 'oman!"

Mrs. Wild could scarcely have ascended a triumphal chariot with more satisfaction than she did the farm-cart in which she, the trunks, and Dr. Jamieson's driver, went to Shrewsbury, while Violet accompanied the doctor himself in the buggy. He kindly stopped at the houses of "her children," as she called those whom she had taught, that she might leave with them some little parting gifts, and earnest parting words, receiving a promise from them that they would go occasionally to read for her mother, and for Mr.

Ham; and that they would always be present when the good man from Manasquam, who had been at Bessie's funeral, should come to teach them how they might go to the happy place where she had gone.

The next morning, Violet was received again into the hospitable home of Dr. Jamieson. Earth and sky were clad in the brightness and luxuriance of the late spring, when she went to Squan Beach. September was throwing her veil of mists over the landscape, and touching the forests with the first faint coloring, soon to give place to more brilliant hues, when she left it. It was a short time; but she had lived much in it, and she had done something. Good seed she had been permitted to sow; and, unpromising as had seemed the soil, it appeared already, through the blessing of Heaven, to give signs of life. There were still clouds around her, but the sun shone through them.

"I may hope that I have done some little good in the world; that I have not lived altogether to myself!" This was the legend on the crown that gleamed above her cross.

CHAPTER X.

"Employment, which Galen calls 'nature's physician,' is so essential to human happiness, that Indolence is justly considered as the mother of Misery." — BURTON.

"A murderous guilt shows not itself more soon
Than love that would seem hid. Love's night is noon."
SHAKSPEARE.

"AND now, my dear, my house will be your home till all these matters have been arranged between your Papa Ross and you, and as long after as you can be contented to stay with us," said Dr. Jamieson to Violet, as they were going up from the steamboat to his house.

"Thank you, Doctor; you are very kind!" Violet answered; then, after a short pause, added, "If you would do me one other favor!"

"A thousand, my dear, if I can!"

"This is only to be kind enough to tell Mrs. Jamieson for me, — for many reasons, I do not like to talk about — about — what has happened," Violet said, with painful embarrassment.

Dr. Jamieson understood her. He saw that her pride and her delicacy were alike wounded for her parents and for herself; and he answered, "You are quite right, my child; the least said about such affairs the better. It is only silly girls and boys who talk of them. There is no necessity to say anything, even to Mrs. Jamieson. It is the first axiom of a medical man's morality, my dear, not to talk to his wife of his patients. Now, you are my patient, and I shall not talk to Mrs. Jamieson of you, except to say, what she will be very glad to hear, that I have brought you

up to stay while Lizzie is away. Can you be as prudent as I am, Mrs. Wild?" he asked, abruptly, of the good woman, who sat opposite to him in the carriage.

"I think so, sir!" said Mrs. Wild, coloring and bridling a little. "I know when to speak, sir!"

"Most women do that, Mrs. Wild," the doctor gravely replied.

"And when to be silent, too, sir, I hope."

"Ah! that is the important knowledge, here, Mrs. Wild," said the doctor.

"I will answer for Mrs. Wild's prudence," Violet said, looking with a pleasant smile upon the good housekeeper, who had proved so useful and so kind a friend to her. The smile healed the wound which the doctor's seeming doubt of her prudence had inflicted.

Of the long letter from Violet which the next day's mail bore to Capt. Ross, the first part was but a recapitulation of what is already known to the reader; a recapitulation in which she was careful to soften all that could feed the bitter resentments of Capt. Ross towards her parents. Had no holier motive restrained her, womanly delicacy and self-respect would have shrunk from recounting all the humiliations she had suffered, even to this dearest and most revered of friends. Of the solemn promises given to Katy, before she was permitted to leave, no tittle was withheld. Then she wrote: "It was hard, dear Papa Ross, to promise that I would not go to the beloved home which had sheltered me so long. I think I felt, in doing it, as poor Eve would have done, had the gate of Eden been opened to her after her expulsion, and she had been forced to take a vow that she would not enter it. Perhaps you will say that I should not have made this promise; but, dear Papa Ross, you will remember it was to my mother, and she was yielding much, and, I am afraid, risking much, for me. And, if I cannot live with you, I can see you, and you will come to see me wherever I am — I know you will. And tell Edward he must

find the right person and be married as soon as possible, and then I shall be your petted child once more; and till then —— now, dear Papa Ross, do not throw my letter aside, and spring up and walk about the room, and say you never will consent to it, but just read quietly all I have to tell you, and think it over calmly, and, after that, if you can consent to my wish, you will make me very happy; if you cannot, I will relinquish it, and you shall dispose of me as you please, provided my best and kindest of papas does not ask me to break any of the promises so solemnly made to my mother. Now for this great, cherished wish of my heart! It is to be a governess, and by this not unpleasant work to support myself, and, perhaps, add something to the comfort of my poor mother. Is it very vain in me to believe that I can do this? I am eighteen, now, you know, and, after all the trouble which you and kind Miss Briôt have taken with me, I must be unteachable, indeed, if I have not acquired something which others, less favored, would be glad to gain from me. I know your generous heart, and that you will say, 'There is no need for you to work; you shall have all that you need for yourself and your mother.' But, now, my good Papa Ross, listen to your own little Violet, and let her tell you all that is in her heart. Those four months spent on the beach gave me a great deal of time to think; and amongst the many thoughts that came to me then was one which has abided with me. It is this: that our heavenly Father has so planned everything in this world that there is no happiness or peace, but only a constant weariness and discontent, for one who does not work. I suppose the nobler the work, the higher the happiness, the more perfect the peace; but all work brings some happiness, some satisfaction, at least. Now, dear Papa Ross, I am afraid of myself, if I should be idle; afraid that I should become discontented, — ungrateful girl that I am! — and, because there are a few clouds in my sky, should shut my eyes to all the brightness. At Squan Beach I worked; and if I had

been left to work in peace, I could almost have forgotten the clouds, which looked very large and very dark when first I went there. Could I be with you in your own home, I should have a blessed work to do — to gather every thorn from your path, and plant flowers in their place, and to do all that such a poor little thing as I could do to help and to serve those who depend on you. But, alone, away from Squan Beach, and away from you, what could I do? You will tell me, perhaps, that there is work everywhere. I know it, dear papa; and, if I were better than I am, I should find it, and do it; but, O! I dare not trust myself, I am so ungrateful! These clouds have a strange fascination for me; I cannot turn away from them, and they will soon overpower all the brightness, and make me a discontented, miserable thing, unless there is some necessity compelling me to work. So, with all the little strength I have left, dear Papa Ross, I cry to you to help me, by letting me feel that there is a necessity for me to work. I should like to find my work far away from this place, that my father and mother might not interrupt me in it. Perhaps I might find it at the South, near enough to hear of you often, to see you sometimes; would I not be a happy girl then?

"Let me hear from you very soon, if you please. I have not heard for many weeks — I feel as if it had been months — from you, or any one at home, dear home! I have not even heard of you, except from a few hurried lines, full of tender anxiety for me, which Dr. Jamieson let me see. How grateful I shall always be to Wild for having written the letter that brought them! Will not Edward write me — my dear brother Edward! I long for the day when I can meet him again as in the happy time last spring. What a blessed month that month of May was! What is Miss Briôt doing? I should be so glad to see her bright, animated face!

"May Heaven bless you, dear Papa Ross, my dearest and best of friends! Your own

"VIOLET."

The morning of the fourth day after the sending of this letter had come, and, though Dr. Jamieson assured Violet it was impossible she should receive an answer so soon, she could not quite relinquish all hope of one. The door-bell rang a quick, impatient ring. She was sure it was the postman, and stepped from the breakfast-room into the drawing-room, that she might be nearer the front door, and receive her letter more quickly. She hears her name; but surely that is no postman's voice. She stands with her eyes fixed intently on the open door; a hope, which she scarcely dares to believe a possibility, throbs at her heart, and flushes her cheek; a rapid step approaches; she is folded in the arms of Capt. Ross! No word is spoken by either for many minutes. At length, looking up at him, she says, "You have been ill, Papa Ross; you are pale and thin!" He answers only by a kiss. It seems as if heart and mind were full of a voiceless delight, in the recovery of the treasure which he had scarcely hoped ever to regain. Is the delight a thanksgiving? The reader shall judge.

Never did earth hold a spirit in more bitter rebellion against the decrees of Him who ruleth all things according to the counsel of His own will than was that of Capt. Ross, when he saw the child he had so long considered his own, and whom he loved so tenderly, borne from his arms to a home whose wretched poverty was its least terrible feature. Miss Briôt had called him "iron," because he seemed to her dark and hard in Violet's short absences, when he knew that, if she lived, she would return. What would she call him now, when all the common forms of life seemed but as a misty illusion, through which he saw the one reality, that desolate beach and its lonely house, and when nearer, more distinct, seemed the beat of the surf upon its shore, than all the sounds around him?

Most men, under such influences, would have rushed into society. Capt. Ross desired loneliness; not that he might "commune with his heart and *be still*;" not that the will

which would have ruled others so despotically might strive for that last and highest victory, the rule over itself; but that he might be free from all control — free to abandon himself to the wild raging of the tempest in his soul. It was easy to persuade Edward to spend the summer in becoming acquainted with the magnificent scenery of his own land. It was more difficult to induce Miss Briôt, who was looking out for another situation, but whom he had requested to consider his house as her home so long as she was disengaged, to accompany him; and it was well-nigh impossible to convince Mr. Merton that it would be more pleasant to make one of their party, than to spend a few days, as usual, at some little sea-side place, with Mrs. Merton and Lucy. But the impossible was accomplished, and in ten days after Violet left him Capt. Ross could turn from the carriage which bore them away, and walk into his study, saying, with a strange exultation, "I am at last alone!" Alone! terrible doom, to which the All-Merciful consigns no living man. Even now He was with this wayward soul, though it recognized not his presence, guiding his thoughts, and forcing on him the unwilling conviction that his self-assertion, his determined working for his own ends, had produced the evil under which he groaned, — that he had loosened from its bed the stone which had crushed him. He had assumed the prerogatives which belong not to mortal man; he had shut his eyes to the indications of Providence; he had overborne his son's feeble resistance; — far harder task! — he had closed his ears to Violet's imploring cries, in order that he might take her forever from her parents' hands, and make her, as he had determined she should be, wholly his own. He had thus aroused their jealousy, their opposition; and now she was suffering for his fault. His own sorrow had hardened him; in the contemplation of hers, he grew tender. There were times when the man of iron wept; there came a time when he prayed, — not yet with the confidence of the loving child, but with the wild cry of

helplessness to power. This was when Mrs. Wild's long-delayed letter arrived, and he thought his darling was passing away to the far land whence she could never return. And now she was in his arms! God had heard the cry of his creature, and given her back; and the iron melted, and the stone in his bosom grew a living heart; and when he heard her voice, her tender voice, more like his own Violet's than ever, as she noticed the ravages which misery had made in him, all pride, all self-command, gave way, and the strong man bowed his face upon the head which rested upon him, and sobbed aloud. Think you no thanksgiving went up to the throne of God then?

There came a calmer hour, even on that day, when Violet could speak of her future plans.

"Are you going to let me be a governess?" she asked, with a blush and a smile. A look of wistful tenderness, and then a sudden turning away of the misty eyes, was the only answer she received.

"I am afraid you think me very vain," said Violet, softly, and she hung her head with shame.

"No, my darling, I do not! I have no doubt you would make a capital governess for young children, now; and, as your pupils matured and expanded in intellect, so would you; so that you would always be in advance of them."

"Then you consent! I am so glad!" But the brightness faded from her face, as she saw that his preserved its gravity.

"Violet, I cannot refuse my consent," he said; "but—"

"Pardon me, dear Papa Ross, for interrupting you; but I could not be happy in undertaking anything to which your consent was not freely given."

"My good child, you trust me still? Well, let us talk this over. Your letter I read, as you desired I should, and I acknowledge your reasons are very true and very powerful; and though I, naturally, feel reluctant to see you in

such a position, I will try to think only of you — to be, for once, unselfish."

"Dear Papa Ross! when were you ever otherwise? Never, never to me!" Violet exclaimed, warmly; and she could scarcely understand the look of dissent, and the grave shake of the head, she received in reply.

"Putting myself aside, then," he resumed, "have you thought, my dear child, of all the trials of such a position for you — of the slights, perhaps, the insults, which you may, I might almost say which you certainly will receive, from the littleness of pride?"

"Papa Ross, I think it is pride which provokes pride; and Squan Beach has made me very humble," said Violet.

He drew her more closely to him, and passed his hand caressingly over her bowed head, as he continued, "And have you thought, my poor darling, of the weary hours of unsatisfying labor?"

"O, yes! I have thought of these; but, it seems to me —— Papa Ross, is not the weariness of labor more easily borne than the weariness of idleness? Even if you accomplish little, there seems a satisfaction in knowing that you have tried."

"You know, Violet, that there is no necessity for your working, — that, whether I live or die, you will be provided for."

"Yes, I know that; but, as I wrote you, I dare not be idle. O, Papa Ross! you cannot think how miserable I was those first two weeks at the beach, before I had roused myself to work; and yet, I am afraid I should not persevere in my work, if I were not kept up to it by a necessity, — a friendly necessity," she added, with a smile.

"You persevered at the beach," he said.

"Ah! but that was different from any other work. You know I felt myself called to that by God himself. I could not leave that till he brought me away."

In his present state of mind, there was something pecu-

liarly touching to Capt. Ross in this childlike dependence upon providential guidance. He rose, paced the room for a moment, not with the hurry of agitation, but with a calm, thoughtful manner; then, returning to Violet's side, he said, "I think we will do this, my dear. I will write to a friend of mine, — a lady who lives in Sunbury, the nearest town to my island home, — and ask her whether she can procure an engagement for you with some pleasant, kind family, for six months. At the end of that time, you can renew the engagement or not, as may seem advisable. Will this satisfy you?"

"O, yes, dear Papa Ross! the very thing I should desire! And how far is Sunbury from the island?"

"Only about a day's journey, even in our slow stage-coaches, from the point at which we land."

"I can see you often, then. How delightful! And, when Edward is married, I can come and be your own, own Violet, again."

Violet's smiles were gay, almost, as they had been in her childhood; but Capt. Ross sighed, for that condition reminded him that he had himself erected the barrier between them, — that he himself had driven the child he loved into exile.

The projected letter was written in time for the next day's mail. Measuring by time, Savannah was then as distant from New York as Liverpool now is; eight or ten days being required for the transmission of a letter from one to the other; and Sunbury was one day farther than Savannah. It was the middle of October when an answer was received from Mrs. Baillie, the cousin of Capt. Ross. Before that time, an incident had occurred which had greatly quickened the anxiety of Capt. Ross respecting the result of his application.

On one of those warm afternoons which occasionally follow the cool, misty mornings of the early autumn, Mrs. Jamieson proposed that the gentlemen, Violet, and herself

should cross the river to Hoboken, — a resort not then condemned by fashion, — and take a drive in the beautiful country surrounding it. All were delighted at the suggestion. The carriage was ordered. It was of that kind which, instead of the high coachman's seat, gives the driver a part of the front seat of the carriage, so that he can converse with those he is driving. As the carriage accommodated but four persons, one of the gentlemen must drive; and Dr. Jamieson, saying that he had enough of that work, gave the reins to Capt. Ross. The horses, though mettlesome, were well trained. The easy carriage, its curtains rolled up, to admit the lovely views, and the cool, bracing sea-breeze, rolled pleasantly along through shaded country roads, which gave glimpses, now and then, of the great city in their neighborhood, or of the distant Narrows, where ships were entering, with all sails set to a fair breeze, or were more slowly beating out to sea, against the wind. The faint, pale rose-bloom deepened on Violet's cheek; the black shadow of care was swept from the brow of Capt. Ross; Dr. Jamieson forgot his patients for a few short hours, and Mrs. Jamieson her anxieties about the children; all their hearts reflected the brightness of the bounteous heavens above them. The sun had been for some time below the horizon, and they were proceeding at a pretty quick pace along the densely-shaded and now dusky road that skirts the place known as the Elysian Fields, when two men sprang out from behind a tree at the roadside, directly in front of them, and, seizing the horses by the bridles, attempted to back the carriage into the wood. Capt. Ross urged the spirited horses on with whip and voice. They plunged violently, reared, and, freeing themselves from the grasp laid on their bridles, dashed forward in a run. Even while gathering up his reins, and soothing them with the gentle "Whoa! whoa! so, there!" Capt. Ross had grasped his whip tightly by the lash, and given one parting blow to the man on his side. The whole

affair had occupied scarcely a minute. The ladies had felt the sudden check to the carriage, and then the equally sudden plunge forward; and they asked, "What is the matter?"

"Only two fools tried to stop the carriage, — drunk, I suppose."

"Why, doctor! Do you think they meant to rob us?" cried Mrs. Jamieson.

"I really cannot tell, my dear. Shall I go back and ask them?" he said, with the utmost simplicity, rising, at the same time, as if to descend from the carriage.

"O, no, doctor! Pray, pray, Capt. Ross, cannot we go a little faster?"

"I did not buy these horses for racing, my dear! I am afraid they will not run any faster than they are doing."

"Running, are they? O, Violet! do you hear? The horses are running away!"

"O, no, Mrs. Jamieson! there is no danger. It is only the doctor's fun," said Violet, laughing. "Papa Ross has them fast. You may trust him not to let them run far, either with him or from him."

"They are quite quiet now, Mrs. Jamieson," said Capt. Ross; then, turning to the doctor, he asked, "Are your public drives often infested by such cattle?"

"Not very often. But hurry a little, if you please, and let us get over by that boat which has just come in. We may have to wait some time for another."

Capt. Ross obeyed; and without further incident, though with spirits somewhat subdued by this, the party arrived at home about eight o'clock.

"Come and take a cigar, down stairs, with me, Ross," said Dr. Jamieson, as they rose from the tea-table. The invitation was accepted, and they were soon seated where we showed them many years ago to the reader. The cigars were lighted; and, for a while, both gentlemen smoked as if that were the only business of the evening. Suddenly

the doctor removed his cigar, to ask, "Do you know who that was you struck this evening?"

"No; but he deserved the blow, whoever it was. Was it any one you know?"

The doctor nodded, but continued smoking silently till Capt. Ross said, "May I ask who the villain was?" Then he removed his cigar again; and, fixing his eyes on his friend, answered, "Dick Van Dyke."

"Is it possible?" cried Capt. Ross, greatly surprised. "And the man who was with him?"

"Is the brute to whom he wanted to marry Violet."

"Their object, then, is plain enough," said Capt. Ross. "They must have seen her in the carriage."

The doctor assented by a look, and again the cigars seemed all the world to those who held them. At length Capt. Ross asked, "What do you think he will do next?"

"Come here," answered Dr. Jamieson, concisely.

"And when?"

"This evening, I think, unless your blow was too hard."

Capt. Ross, throwing away his cigar, sat erect upon his chair, as if he had roused himself to meet the emergency. "Would it not be better," he asked, "that I should take Violet away, and leave you to say, with truth, that she is not here?"

"Where could you take her, that she would be more safe than here? These people, depend on it, have their spies around, and you would probably be met before you had gone far. My advice is, send Violet to bed, on the plea that she is looking tired. Keep out of sight yourself, but within call, and let me meet Dick alone."

After a little thought, Capt. Ross said, "I believe you are right. I cannot see the rascal with any patience; and the more I embroil myself with him, the worse it will be for my poor Violet. I must send her to bed at once. I would not for the world have her shocked by the sight of

him, now that her spirits are just beginning to recover their tone."

He went out of the room, but returned immediately to say, "Jamieson, remember, money — five thousand — ten thousand dollars — will be nothing to me, if it will buy her peace."

Dr. Jamieson had judged rightly that Dick Van Dyke was too angry, and too determined on his prey, to suffer the evening to pass without claiming it. He had come directly from the ferry to Dr. Jamieson's, where he now knew Violet to be, and where he arrived about ten in the evening. According to orders which the doctor had given immediately on his arrival to the servant, he was shown into his office. He made no salutation, as he entered, but accosted the doctor, abruptly, with, "Dr. Jimersen, where 's my gal Wi'let? I come for her!"

"Who? what?" cried the doctor, peering at him as if uncertain of his identity. "Why, Dick Van Dyke! where are you from?"

"Jist from the same place wi' you, an' ye knowed ut a'ready."

"What — from Hoboken?"

"Yis, from Hobucken — an' I 'm tired, an' can't stop to talk. So, gie me my gal, an' let me go!"

"How do you know that Violet is with me? You speak as confidently as if you had seen her."

"An' han't I seen her? an' did n't that ——— black devil, curse his ——

"Stop, stop, Dick! I never let anybody curse here, but myself. Now, if you want me to listen to you, you must speak decently; but first take a seat, and wait a minute."

"I can't wait — I 'm tired and hungry!" said Dick; but Dr. Jamieson had gone out, and, as there was nothing better to be done, Dick sat down, looking with impatient eyes at the door, through which Dr. Jamieson soon reäppeared,

followed by a servant, bringing on a waiter a tumbler of whiskey-toddy, and a plate containing meat, bread, and apple-pie.

"Set that table by Mr. Van Dyke, and put your waiter on it," said the doctor. It was done, and the man left the room.

Dick looked askance at the supper. He was very hungry, as he had said; but he was stanch as a blood-hound; the game was within reach of him, and he would not be won from it.

"Doctor Jimersen," he said, fiercely, "I did n't come for no supper! — I come for my gal, an' I will have her, I tell yer!"

"Well, well, man, can't you take what you did n't come for? Did you never hear that it 's ill talking between a full man and a fasting? Eat your supper, and drink your toddy, and then we 'll talk; it 's no use to say a word till then, for I won't hear you."

Dick addressed himself to the supper thus commended to him, and cleared the plate before him, though he got at its contents somewhat awkwardly, from being apparently unable to use his right hand. Having emptied the plate, he drained every drop contained in the tumbler, put it down, and, turning to the doctor, who had, in the mean time, smoked his cigar in silence, said, as determinedly as ever, though less fiercely, perhaps, "Doctor Jimersen, I wantst my gal Wi'let!"

"And suppose I say you can't have her?"

Dick started from his chair, and it was well, perhaps, for Dr. Jamieson, that his right hand was disabled. He raised it, as he stood, his tall form dilated with passion, his face dark with rage; but it fell powerless to his side, and, groaning with the pain it had given him to move it, he sank again into his chair.

"Why, Dick, man! what 's the matter? Instead of quarrelling with me, just show me your hand, and let me see

what I can do for it." He had taken it, as he spoke, and, in spite of a little resistance from Dick, he had pushed up the sleeve of his coarse jacket, and seen the arm, about halfway between the wrist and the elbow, black and swollen.

"Why, how did you get this?" asked the doctor.

"Did n't I tell yer? an' did n't ye see him, this evenin', wen he licked me like a dog wi' his whip? —— him!" We omit Dick's curses.

"Whew!" whistled Dr. Jamieson. "And so you were one of the men that stopped my carriage, this evening, at Hoboken? Dick, do you know I could put you in the state's prison for that?"

The doctor had taken a bottle of liniment from his medicine-chest, and all the time he talked with Dick continued to rub the arm gently with it. It would have been amusing to a spectator to see his tenderness of the arm, contrasted with his severity to Dick himself.

The mention of the state's prison was a masterly device of Dr. Jamieson's. He had not known Dick so long without ascertaining that, while perfectly fearless of all that he could meet and grapple with hand to hand, he had some dread of that mysterious power which dragged unwilling men to courts, to prisons, or to the gallows. This was evident now from his silence, and from the glance he cast at the doctor, as if wishing to ascertain whether he were in earnest. The gravity of his countenance was not encouraging. He went on slowly rubbing the arm; then, taking from the same chest a roll of linen, he selected a bandage, cut off about a half-yard from it, which he soaked in the liniment, and bound around the arm, using the remainder as a sling in which he rested the hand, after having drawn down the sleeve. All this was done without a word. "And now is your arm more comfortable?" asked Dr. Jamieson.

"Yis," answered Dick, more sullenly than gratefully; "and now I wants ter go!"

"Very well; there 's the door."

"But I an't a goin' widout Wi'let!"

"Then I must bid you good-night. Nonsense, Dick Van Dyke! Do you think that, after what I saw on the beach, myself, you shall ever have that girl in your hands again? Go home, and be thankful that I have not sent a posse comitatus to Squan to arrest you and try you for — for — being accessory to murder before the fact!"

Dr. Jamieson knew the force of words, and he felt sure that *posse comitatus* and *accessory to murder* would finish what the state's prison had begun. They were not without their effect. The blood-hound loosed his prey for a time, but he gave ground slowly and sullenly, waiting only a surer time to spring forward again. Dick rose from his chair, advanced to the door, and turned round when he had reached it, to say, "Dr. Jimersen, yer a scholard and a rich man, an' I be a poor man; but, sure as I live, that gal I'll git! an' I'll mek ur sorry yit ut she took ter follerin' him! Thar's a boy 'ill gie me a thousan' dollar fur ur. I'll gie ur to 'im, an' tell him ——"

"Dick," interrupted Dr. Jamieson, with a sudden recollection of what Capt. Ross had said about money, "suppose Capt. Ross gives you twice, three times, five times one thousand dollars, will you give Violet up to him as his own ——"

The doctor had increased the sum as Dick's countenance looked more and more decided denial. A grim smile now broke over that dark face, and he interrupted the doctor to say, "'T an't no use, Doctor! I won't gie ur to' im for nothin' — not fur a hunder thousan', arter that!" and he touched his lame arm. "I'm a goin', an' I'll jist wait, ye see; but I'll ha' spies, I will; an' she can't go nowhar I shan't know; an' if you was to sen' ur to the Injies, I'd foller ur, an' git my han' on ur, an' then ye'll see!" and he laughed a laugh which made Dr. Jamieson's blood creep. He would have given much to knock him down; he thought of trying it, at least; but Dick was a powerful man — it

would be a troublesome job, and, after all, what would be the use? It would not pay; and so the doctor subsided into his chair, and Dick stalked out of the room, and through the basement door, into the street. Dr. Jamieson rose, called the servant to fasten up the doors and windows, and lazily ascended the stairs, yawning as he went. He found Capt. Ross in his slippers, pacing the hall above.

"What! up yet, Ross?" exclaimed the doctor.

"Yes," answered Capt. Ross; "you told me to be within call."

"So I did. If I had thought of it, I think I should have called you just now to knock the fellow down. I measured him, and thought he 'd be too much for me, even with one lame arm. Besides, I was very tired;" and the doctor yawned fearfully again.

"Did you offer him money? What did he say?"

"O, he said a thousand absurd things. Yes, I offered him money, but he was as much bent upon his *gal* as Othello was upon his handkerchief; and, like him, would hear of nothing else. He will certainly try his best to get hold of her, poor thing! I wish she could be off to-morrow, though I do hate to part with her. But it is almost twelve o'clock, and I must be up at five to see a patient going into the country. Ross, I hope you remember always in your prayers to return thanks that you are not a physician."

With a faint smile, Capt. Ross returned his good-night, and went to his room, feeling that he should know little peace till Violet was on her way to Savannah. Mrs. Baillie's letter, which arrived a few days after, was, therefore, as welcome to him as to Violet herself. The letter was as follows:

"*Sunbury, Oct. 7th*, 1832.

"DEAR COUSIN ROSS: It has been so long since I saw your handwriting that I did not know it at all when your letter came. I was none the less glad, though, to hear

from you, my dear cousin; and it was a great pleasure to me to hear that you think of coming back to your own state again. I must say, it always seemed very strange to us all here that you should leave the South and go to live among the Yankees. I hear some of them are very good, honest people; but, you know, the only ones we see at the South are those that go round selling clocks; and, only last year, one of them went to cousin William Baillie's (you remember him, I dare say; he lives just where he used to do, at "The Forest"); well, this pedler sold him a dozen cakes of soap. He thought he got them very cheap; but the man was hardly gone before they found out that the soap was nothing but clay cut into cakes and dried. Now, I must say I should not like to live among people that do so; but my children laugh when I say so, and tell me there are just as good and noble-hearted Yankees as there are Southerners; and so I hope there are; only we never see them here, you know. But what nonsense I am running on with, when I have so much of more importance to say! I had only two children when you went, and now I have five, besides having lost two. My two oldest are boys. One of them, Frank, is in the navy; and the other, George, talks of going in the army; but I am in great hopes he will forget it after a while, and settle down at home, if people don't keep it in his head by talking about it. There's the old place, you know, that he could live at, if he married; and it would be a great comfort to have somebody there all the year. We only go at Christmas, that we may carry the people their clothes and presents and things; and everything about the house looks as if it was going to wreck and ruin, for the want of somebody to take care of it. My oldest girl, Louisa, is seventeen, and very much admired. It cannot be wrong for me to say she is pretty, since everybody says so. She is a good child; high-spirited, — all the Baillies are that, you know, — but warm-hearted and generous as the day. The two darlings that I lost came next. Their

death makes a great gap. And then came Harriet, who is eight years old, and our darling little Georgy, who is only six.

"You have heard that we moved here for the education of our children, as we could not afford to send them away to school. Sometimes I think they would have done just as well in our old home, with that little country school that my brother's children went to; but, then, Louisa could not have learned the piano, and there was no dancing-master there; so I suppose, on the whole, they have done better. But the school that Louisa went to here is broken up. The head mistress died, and we have not got another; and so Louisa tried for a while to teach the little ones; but it was too much confinement for a young girl like her, and I tried; but I don't get on with it very well. I was just feeling very much out of heart about it when your letter came; and if the young lady about whom you write would be satisfied with the salary which I can afford to give, — say two hundred dollars a year, — I should be very glad to secure her services for my own little girls. She would be at no expense, you know, except for her clothes. Washing and everything would be done for her, just as for ourselves, and we would try to make her feel at home. It has been very healthy here this summer, and the weather is unusually cool for the season; so that, if she is willing to accept my offer, she might, I think, come at once. You may be sure that she will meet with nothing but kindness and affection. And now, my dear cousin, I have written you this long account of us all, that you might not feel yourself a stranger when you came among us. My children all send their respectful love to you, and I remain, my dear Cousin Ross,

"Your affectionate cousin,

"Caroline Baillie."

We are almost ashamed of Capt. Ross as we record that this kindly, simple-hearted letter was run through with the

utmost impatience, till he reached that part which related to Violet.

"It will be a kind, friendly home for you, my dear child, and that is all. The salary, of course, is of no account, — two hundred dollars; but, then, you have your allowance of four hundred."

"O, dear Papa Ross! I should like to go to them very much," said Violet, who had been reading the letter more carefully. "I love them already, — the little girls, Harriet and Georgia, — and I like the warm-hearted, generous Louisa, and the kindly mother! O! this will do excellently well!"

"Salary and all?" exclaimed Capt. Ross, with a smile, seeing very plainly that she had not heard what he said, nor given a thought to what many would have considered the most important part of the letter.

"O! the salary!" cried Violet, looking back to the sheet she held in her hand. "Two hundred dollars! — well, I dare say, with a little economy, I can make that do nicely."

"You could not make it do at all; for, remember, I have not given my consent to your denying yourself a single accustomed indulgence; and I must always see you dressed as my daughter. Now, do you think you can do all this with these two hundred dollars, in addition to the four hundred you have now?"

"Do all this? Why, I shall be as rich as Crœsus! I shall not know what to do with my wealth."

"They will soon teach you that at the Baillies'. What they have to learn is how to keep it."

"But where is Mr. Baillie, Papa Ross?"

"Dead, my child. Poor Baillie has been dead these four years."

Capt. Ross made a thoughtful pause, which Violet did not interrupt. He soon roused himself, however, to ask, "When can you be ready to go, my child? This is the twelfth. I saw, by this morning's paper, that a fine packet-ship would

sail on the twentieth. Do you think you can be ready for it?"

"Easily, Papa Ross. I have little to do but to pack my trunk." She had been very brave up to that moment; but there was a slight tremor in her voice as she said, "I must go alone, of course."

"You must *not* go alone, of course. Poor child! did you think I was going to send you out into the wide, wide world without a friend? I shall go with you, and we will take Mrs. Wild along. If you should be sea-sick, you will need her. I have already written to Edward to make all the arrangements necessary at Ross Hall, and follow me."

"And Miss Briôt?" questioned Violet.

"Will find a home here, with Mrs. Jamieson, till she meets with another engagement, unless, indeed, she should prefer to come out and open a plantation school at the island. I have given her an invitation there," Capt. Ross said, smiling.

Violet laughed at the idea of Miss Briôt at a plantation school. "You must engage me for that, Papa Ross," she said. "They would understand Miss Briôt's French nearly as well as she would understand their English."

On the twentieth of October, the good ship Garonne went down the bay to the Narrows, with all her sails spread to a favoring breeze. Capt. Ross had sent down his baggage and Violet's in the morning; but they did not themselves go on board till four o'clock in the afternoon; and, through all those long hours, a tall, gaunt figure, with gray head, and dark, weather-beaten face, stood in a seemingly listless attitude, leaning against one of the posts on the wharf. If the attitude was listless, the countenance was not. The eyes glowed under the bent brows like coals of fire. As Capt. Ross, Violet, and Mrs. Wild, descended from their carriage, he rushed impetuously forward; but another carriage drove up between him and them, a police-officer made him give way to men carrying baggage, and, when

next he saw them, they were on the deck of the ship, and he could only shake his fist at them in impotent fury.

A flashily-dressed young man approached him from the crowd. "Now, come, Mr. Van Dyke! don't be a doing that, or the p'lice 'ill be upon you. I knowed we couldn't do nothing here."

"Wot yer come fur, then?" questioned Dick, savagely.

"O! to make all sure for by and by. Now, Mr. Van Dyke, ye don't think they've got away from us for good and all?"

"Them 'ill niver git 'way fro' Dick Wan Dyke, ef thar's a ship can sail arter 'em!"

"Well, ye see we know where they've gone, and I know a boy aboard that's promised to find out all about 'em,— to track 'em to the very house, and tell me when he comes back; and, in them outlandish parts, we kin jist walk in and take her, and they say there's no p'lice nor nothing to hender."

"Them's the thing!" exclaimed Dick, with his grim smile almost becoming a laugh at the thought of such a happy land.

"Ay! Mr. Van Dyke, Ned Spriggins never was the boy to put his hand on anything and take it away agin. The thousand dollars 'ill be yourn yet, and the little beauty 'ill be mine; and won't I make her pay for all this?"

"Ef you don't—" said Dick. The alternative was unspoken; but the countenance of Dick seemed to intimate that he should, in that case, take the action in his own hands.

"Besides, I wouldn't have no objection in the world to spending a little time at the South in the winter. It's a very nice climate, they say, and a sea-voyage is good for the health."

Far from these plotters — far from all the scenes of her past life — goes Violet, with peace in her heart, and hope of good yet to be done and enjoyed beckoning her on. She

waves a farewell to the New Jersey shore, as Capt. Ross points it out to her, and thinks, with misty eyes, of little Bessie's grave, and of the germ of good that seemed struggling into life at the beach, and which she would so gladly have helped forward, had she been permitted. And then her heart glows as she remembers the letter she had received a few days before from the good pastor who had officiated at Bessie's funeral. Violet had enclosed to him, immediately after leaving the beach, twenty-five dollars of her last quarter's allowance, requesting him to expend it, as seemed best to himself, for the benefit of the wreckers' families. At first, she thought of doing this anonymously; but her deep interest in those whom she had taught herself to regard as, in some degree, her charge, overcame her diffidence, and she asked him, if she could at any time be serviceable to him in the work he had undertaken at the beach, to address her, to the care of Dr. Jamieson. Glad was she now that she had done this, since it had brought her a letter full of hope. He had preached, the good man said, more than once at the beach, and had found several who seemed to be willing hearers; whether they would be also doers of the word, could be known only to Him to whom all hearts are open. He could only obey the command to sow the good seed, in dependence on God, who giveth the increase. He spoke with especial interest and hopefulness of her children, of Mr. Ham, and, most joyful of all, of her mother, who, he said, seemed to take great pleasure in listening to him. The children, he thought, would assist the good work by their reading, and he should take care to supply them with judicious books. To this purpose he would devote part of her gift, as part of it had been already expended in giving a copy of the word of God to each child who could read it. Violet resolved that the gift should be renewed quarterly. Half her salary should go to this, and half to her mother's comfort. The allowance which Capt. Ross *would* continue to make her would be amply sufficient

for her own wants. It *should* be sufficient; and it would add a new charm to her work to feel that it was done for a high and holy purpose.

And were such the only thoughts which the last sight of that wild, desolate shore awakened? No; the stranger's grave arose before her, sad, lonely, and full of a mysterious interest: and ever and anon, amid the depressing elements of that weird scene, she saw a manly face, so bright, so strong, so full of conscious power, that she grew calmer and stronger in the very vision; and then the bright eyes softened into tenderness, and looked down, down into hers, with an expression never seen in other eyes; and, with a smile full of promise, he held out to her rare and lovely flowers. And then Violet turned from the vision, and tried to shut it out by other pictures of the past or of the future; for she began to think the promise of that smile had not been kept, nay, sometimes to doubt if it had ever been made; and she would blush, even in the loneliness of her own room, to think that she had been, perchance, but a foolish, sickly dreamer, giving to an act of unmeaning gallantry the character of a true and tender interest, an abiding friendship — she never called it more. And then she would raise her head proudly, and say, softly, to herself, "At least, I will do so no more!" We will not examine too narrowly if the resolution were kept.

And where was he who was thus remembered? In the late fall of the previous year he had commenced his journey through the Southern States on horseback. Diverging hither and thither, now in the circles of the city and now among the hunters of the prairie, at home everywhere, and everywhere welcome for his frank, simple bearing, contradicting all preconceived notions of the model Englishman, wrapped in a cloak of proud and half-sullen reserve, eliciting more than once from some sturdy backwoodsman the compliment, to him, perhaps, somewhat doubtful, of, "Wal, squire, yer ought to be an Amarikin, yer ought." He saw

far more of the country, and learned far more of the inhabitants, in a few months, than years would show or teach to those who, in our day, are whirled with railroad speed over whole continents in a few days, or, at furthest, weeks. The rapid shifting of the scenes through which he passed, the varied incidents he encountered, prevented the time to which he had limited his banishment from Violet from pressing too heavily upon him. The love with which he regarded her, rooted in tender memories of the past, and growing up, in the stillness of his soul, into holy aspirations and resolves for the future, had little in it of the impetuous passion which, like the whirlwind, sweeps all that obstructs it from its path, and which, too often, like the whirlwind, dies when it ceases to combat. Rather was it a sentiment profound and tender, which, having imbedded itself deep in his soul, would endure while he endured, unchilled by delay, unobliterated by disappointment. Circumstance — that god of common minds — might change its character, but could not touch its being. Spring flowers brought a throb of joy to his heart; the good time was coming; for a good time it would be to him when he might, at least, be true to his own feelings — true in speech and act, even though he should not win the great stake for which he was playing. He remembered, however, that spring flowers came early to him in that Southern land; and he determined to delay till there could be no doubt that Edward Ross had returned, and that Capt. Ross had had time to see that Violet's affection for him was, as he firmly believed it, that of a sister, not a wife, or mistress. Still, he was getting impatient; it would be some solace to feel that he was drawing nearer to her; and he set out again, on horseback, to make his way, slowly, but steadily, North; entering the State of New York at Buffalo, on the eastern shore of Lake Erie, in the first week of June. A party with which he had been travelling for a few days were going the next week to Saratoga. They urged him strongly to accompany them.

"Saratoga is a great feature in American life, which you must see. It is the focus of our civilization; the place where you see everybody and hear everything."

That last clause decided the wavering balance of his mind; he might hear of, he might even see, Edward Ross and Violet. He went; and one of the first persons he met there was Lizzie Jamieson, whom he had known and visited, the previous autumn, in New York. She was a gay, rattling, good-hearted girl, travelling with an invalid aunt, who went but little into society. She had found herself somewhat lonely in the gathering company at Saratoga,—the season was not at its full yet,—and was but too glad to welcome to her party a handsome, intelligent, well-bred man, with whom she had some acquaintance, and consequently some subjects of conversation in common. And Mr. Devereux devoted himself to her with quite a flattering degree of *empressement*; for he heard from her names that had been in his thoughts, but never on his lips, for months. It was the second day of his stay at Saratoga; the constraint of their first meeting, as little more than strangers, had passed away; they had become wonderfully sociable over the past. Lizzie had grown bold enough to rally him about the flowers, of which she said she had heard from Miss Briðt. He had reserve of nature, if not of manner. Who, gifted with deep feeling, has it not? He answered with playful badinage, as to a meaningless jest.

"Are you quite sure you are untouched?" asked Lizzie, with an arch smile. "Ah! you do not answer! I think you must be in danger, and that it would be charitable to tell you a secret I know."

"O, tell it me, by all means!"

She hesitated—he grew urgent; the play was becoming earnest. "I really don't see," said Lizzie, "why it should be kept such a secret. I would not hesitate to tell you, except that I am afraid my father would not like it."

"Your father would not like you to tell me a secret

about Miss Van Dyke! You are as mysterious as an oracle, this morning; but, if you will explain, I promise to defend you against all consequences. Your father is not very dangerous, is he?"

How little the gay girl suspected the burning heart that lay beneath those light words!

"O, no!" she answered, with a laugh, "but he is very provoking; even mamma acknowledges that; for he never tells us anything — any gossip, I mean; and some doctors are such delightful people! — they always hear so much, you know!"

"I understand. But may I ask, most oracular lady, what connection there is between this most provoking trait in your good father and this great secret, which I vow to be torn by wild horses rather than betray?"

"O! you see, it was just this. Seeing a letter from Capt. Ross on my father's study-table, and knowing we should never hear a word about them from him, and never dreaming there was any secret in it, as it lay there with the seal broken, and the envelope torn, I just read it; and, behold! it was a letter to tell my father that Violet was engaged to Edward Ross, and to beg my father to go down to Squan Beach, and tell Violet's father and mother of the engagement. But, mind, you don't tell!"

He kept his eye fixed upon her to the last. He suffered not the smile to pass from his lip; he commanded his voice, and it was firm, as he said, "You may confide in me. I never betrayed a secret." But, beneath it all, the agony which had laid its grasp upon his heart would have been seen by one who looked more deeply than Lizzie. She only thought there was a little abruptness in the way in which, as other friends approached, he bowed, and returned alone to the house from the spring, to which they had been taking an afternoon's walk. In the evening, his place at the tea-table was vacant; and, soon after, a gentleman who had been of his party, and whom he had introduced to her, came

up to regret that they had lost the pleasant Englishman. He had left his respects for Miss Jamieson, — would have seen her again, the gentleman did not doubt, but was in such a hurry, — had hardly time to pack his trunks before the stage left Saratoga for Troy.

And whither was he going? He scarcely knew himself. He thought, at first, of sailing immediately for England; but, before he reached Troy, he had relinquished that intention. He would leave no room for after-doubts, — the drama should be played out, — she should be married before he placed the wide Atlantic between them. It would seem that the most rational thing, under such circumstances, was to go where all doubts would be most speedily resolved — to Ross Hall. But when was a disappointed lover known to do what was rational? No; he could not see her now; he must be calmer first, — he should betray himself, and inflict suffering on her tender heart; yet see her he would before he left America. How to get rid of the time till he felt strong enough for this? — that was the present question. He heard people talking of the White Mountains. He would go and see them, — it was something to do. And so, drearily he went on, travelling to places which he did not care to see; staying in the most lonely spots, only because they were lonely; walking, under pretence of sketching, to scenes at which, when he had reached them, he scarcely looked, — until summer had mellowed into autumn; and then he aroused himself, one day, so far as to decide that this could not go on forever, — that he must do something; and, rather because it seemed the only thing he had left undone than from any better reason, he determined that this something should be to go to Ross Hall. "I promised I would go there before I left the country, — I will not break my promise," he said to himself. But first he wrote to his banker in New York to send him, at the little New England village at which he then was, the letters that he might have received for him. They came, after the provoking delays to which

all mail transactions were subject at that time, reaching him in the first week of October. Among them was the letter from Mike, which, as the reader may remember, mentioned that Violet had left Ross Hall for Squan Beach. It gave a new impulse to the life which had been stagnating for so many weeks. He did not know all, — there was something to learn about her, — and he was impatient to be at Ross Hall; and, like Romeo, would have annihilated time and space, but, like Romeo, lacked the power. Not even a railroad was there for his help: there was but one in the country, and that lay not on his route. The slow stage-coaches were four days in getting him to the so often named post-town of G——. A carriage, which he insisted on driving himself, so urging the steeds to a somewhat quicker movement, bore him to Ross Hall, which he reached on the evening of the fourteenth. Miss Briôt was the only person at home, and received him as one so social might be expected to receive an agreeable visitor, after being for more than a fortnight alone. To his inquiries for the family she answered, "O! scattered in every direction. Poor Violet! — you heard about her, of course?"

"Yes; I understood that Miss Van Dyke was to be married to Mr. Ross."

Here was a plunge indeed! But he really could endure his suspense no longer, now that he was in the very presence of one who could tell him all.

"Indeed! Then you have heard more than I have, or any one here," said Miss Briôt, with her usual animation; adding, with a laugh, "Really, after that, my news will seem very small!"

"Do you mean to say they never were engaged?"

"It would be a thing very strange if they were, and I should not know it."

The reader will remember that this very strange thing did, however, occur; that, by Violet's wish, her unwilling engagement was not to be named until the consent of her father and mother had been obtained. Of course, their pos-

itive refusal to sanction it had made Capt. Ross desire as heartily as herself that it should be kept secret. "Poor child!" Miss Briôt continued, "it was not of her happy betrothal I was thinking, but of that sad, sad parting. O, Mr. Devereux, you have seen that terrible woman! It is no wonder our poor Violet fainted when she came. And yet she was so gentle to her — so submissive! I never have seen such heavenly beauty, — smiling on us to the last. O, she is an angel!"

Miss Briôt's voice was broken, and tears were streaming down her cheeks, as she concluded.

Mr. Devereux looked from the window a moment, and cleared his voice more than once; yet it sounded husky at last, when he turned to say, "And she is still at Squan Beach?"

"No; a little more than one fortnight it has been that she wrote to Capt. Ross that she had come up to Dr. Jamieson's. I did not see her letter; for Capt. Ross is more reserved than ever, though he is very kind, too. But I know she was ill, and Dr. Jamieson went to see her; and her mother let her come up to New York, but would not let her come here, or live with Capt. Ross anywhere, — so he has gone to her."

"And Mr. Edward Ross is with them, I suppose?" There spoke the lover's doubts again.

"Edward! O, no!" and Miss Briôt laughed gayly; "not unless Miss Peyton has taken it into her fanciful brain to go off to New York."

"Miss Peyton! Who is she?" asked Mr. Devereux.

"A young Virginia beauty whom we met in travelling, and who has literally taken possession of Edward. He is no more for himself or anybody else, but for Miss Peyton."

How gay Mr. Devereux becomes! How his ready playfulness excites Miss Briôt's, and Miss Briôt's his, till she declares he has brought all the sunshine with him which he promised to send, and he assures her he has found it with er! At length the evening is passed, and he tells her that

he shall set out early in the morning for New York, inquiring if she has any commands for him. But she answers, eagerly, "O! you must not think of going yet, — at least, not till our mail comes in to-morrow. Perhaps I may hear something that will change your plans."

There is a little archness in her manner, and he does not deny that it may be so, — he will wait. He has taken his candle, and said good-night, — the servant waits in the hall to show him his room, — Miss Briôt calls him back. "Mr. Devereux!" — he comes near; she looks at him with a mischievous smile. — "The flowers were very beautiful. But, O! what a Cupid!" Both laugh merrily; then he asks, with a voice which he tries to make gay, "Did she care for them?"

"Ask her!" Miss Briôt says; and, with another laughing good-night, they separate.

The post-boy does not come quite so early as when Capt. Ross is at home. He has loitered on his way, and it is twelve o'clock when he enters — too late for Mr. Devereux to take the stage that would put him on his way to New York to-day, though Miss Briôt receives a letter announcing that Capt. Ross and Violet will sail in the packet-ship Garonne, on the twentieth, for Savannah. Mr. Devereux is impatient now of every hour's delay; yet Miss Briôt knows how to make the day pass pleasantly away; — she can show him much, and tell him more, that is interesting to him, and that without assuming the confidential tone which her nice tact tells her would make him draw within his shell. She can tell him how she had seen Mike in one of her early walks, and had coöperated with him in placing the flowers, and preserving him from detection. It was she who had watched for him, and told him of Violet's removal to the beach. The following day, Mr. Devereux left Ross Hall for New York, where he only arrived on the morning of the twentieth. He was in time, however, to take a state-room on board the Garonne, and while Violet

stood gazing on the New Jersey coast the very face which memory pictured so bright and strong, was near her; those eyes which she dared not meet in fancy were bending their wistful gaze upon her. But he did not wish that their first meeting should be thus, surrounded by strangers; — nay, even alone he would not meet her till every claim which Capt. Ross could make on him, in justice or in honor, had been satisfied, and he was at liberty to speak to her as he had never yet spoken. He dared not trust himself with her till then.

There was a fresh breeze, and, with the wind directly aft, the ship had much of that pitching motion which generally clears the deck of all the ladies, and of many of the gentlemen, before land is well out of sight. In the present case, there was no exception to this rule. Gay voices were hushed, and faces that had come on board bright with color grew pale and disappeared; but Violet still remained beside Capt. Ross, with the rose in her cheek somewhat freshened by the breeze. She was evidently one of the fortunate few exempted by constitution from that tax which most of us must pay for the privilege of riding the waves. Capt. Ross was delighted, and said, softly, as if he loved to trace the resemblance between them in all things, "My Violet never was sea-sick. In the yachting parties on which we sometimes went, she was always the bravest sailor among the ladies."

The state-room which Mrs. Wild and Violet were to occupy was above the deck. It would, therefore, have the same pure, fresh air as that which Violet was now breathing; and, at nine o'clock, as Mrs. Wild looked very weary, yet would not lie down till she saw her young lady at rest, Violet reluctantly withdrew from the quiet deck, leaving Capt. Ross to pace it alone, "until," as he said, "he should feel sleepy." Scarcely had she disappeared, when a gentleman wearing a cloak — for the air was chilly — drew near

to Capt. Ross, and, lifting his hat as he spoke, bade him "good-evening."

"Good-evening, sir," said Capt. Ross, politely, but distantly, not recognizing the voice.

The stranger continued to walk silently at his side until they came within the little circle of light thrown from the binnacle, when, taking his hat entirely off, he said, "I believe you do not recognize me, Capt. Ross."

One rapid glance, and Capt. Ross extended his hand, exclaiming, "I certainly did not, Mr. Devereux; but I am none the less pleased to meet you. How is it that I have not seen you before since I came on board? Violet has just left me."

"I saw her, and it was because she was with you, Capt. Ross, that I did not accost you. I could not trust myself."

Capt. Ross did not answer, and they walked the whole length of the deck in perfect silence. Mr. Devereux could restrain himself no longer; his soul was on fire — the feelings which he had mastered so long rushed forth impetuously, and would be heard. His voice was low and unsteady, but Capt. Ross was forced to feel that there was a heart-throb in every tone; his words were disconnected, often incoherent, but in each of them was a passion strong as his life. He reminded Capt. Ross that it was now a year since he had spoken to him of his love for Violet; that, yielding not to his power only, but to what he acknowledged was the justice of his claim upon the child he had reared, he had not sought a hearing from her; that, doubtful of his power to continue silent, he had even withdrawn himself from her sphere.

"But there were other obstacles to your wishes than my will, Mr. Devereux. Excuse me for reminding you that you had 'hesitations' yourself," interrupted Capt. Ross.

"Which seemed as strong cords till I measured their power with the agony of leaving her; and then they were as burnt threads, that might be snapped in an instant. I

am not sure, Capt. Ross, that I could have left her, even though believing that against your will I could not win her. I fear that I should, with selfish passion, have striven for her, and so have agitated the pure, sweet life which I could not bless, had I not felt a strange — I had almost said *certainty* that your designs would never be realized; that she was too much your daughter, too much the sister of your son, to assume the new relations you desired without a pang which you loved her too tenderly to inflict."

"You mistake, sir; I was less tender than you supposed; I did inflict it," said Capt. Ross, bitterly.

"And she is, then, your son's? — O, Capt. Ross!"

"Not *is*, sir; but she would have been, had not"— Capt. Ross paused a moment, and then, in a subdued voice, and with a bowed head, resumed, — "had not One wiser and more merciful than I overruled my designs."

In the presence which that allusion recalled, all passion seemed for a moment hushed. When Mr. Devereux resumed, it was with a calmer manner. "I heard something of this," he said, "as I was on my way to Ross Hall, in the early summer. It made a powerless wretch of me. For many weeks I wandered I scarce know where, — aimless, hopeless. Other intelligence made me doubt the truth of this. I went to Ross Hall; heard that your son was pursuing another; that she, Violet, was free; that you were to sail in this ship for Savannah. I had barely time to reach New York before she sailed, and did not hesitate for a moment to come on board and make the voyage with you. And now, Capt. Ross, have I your consent to seek love for love?"

"Mr. Devereux," Capt. Ross began, in a tone which to the strained ear of Mr. Devereux sounded cold, and he interrupted him.

"Capt. Ross," he said, "words are at last so poor an expression of feeling that I fear I have not made you in

any degree aware of the importance of your answer to me. And what shall I say? To her no suit would be too humble; — to you, a man like myself, — I might remind you of my position, fortune; but she, in her simple self, so immeasurably outweighs all I have to offer, that it seems as nothing when brought into comparison. I can only pray you remember your own love — and her, sacred to me as to you; and then ——"

The broken words ceased; he stood still in his walk, and turned his face on Capt. Ross, as if in that crisis of his fate all the powers of his life had concentred themselves on that one act of hearing. His last adjuration was not without effect. There was more of feeling in the tone with which Capt. Ross said, "If you can win Violet's consent to be yours, Mr. Devereux, mine shall not be withheld. I have no right to withhold it; yet, to be frank with you, I cannot wish you success, since in becoming yours Violet must cease to be mine, with the Atlantic between us ——"

"Pardon me for interrupting you; but why need this be? Why not come with *us*, — should I be so happy as to be privileged to use that word in such a connection, — to England, the home from which, I have heard it said, your father came? Your son is ready to take your place here, and fulfil those duties that might otherwise detain you. Besides, the improvements in navigation are every day bringing nearer the countries, united by so many ties."

"We will speak of this another time," said Capt. Ross, not unkindly. "There are many things to be thought of, in such a change."

"There are, and I will say no more of it till my own fate is decided. Whatever it may be, Capt. Ross, I shall not forget the patience with which you have heard me this evening, nor the generosity with which you have withdrawn your opposition to my wishes."

He held out his hand. Capt. Ross clasped it; then, as Mr.

Devereux was turning from him to his state-room, he asked him, "Shall I speak to Violet in the morning?"

"I think—perhaps," said Mr. Devereux, with some embarrassment. He would not, for worlds, have trusted his cause to other hands than his own.

"You would rather not," said Capt. Ross, smiling, as he read his feelings; "but I only meant to tell her you were here before you should meet."

"O! certainly, if you should see her first," said Mr. Devereux, remembering, with no small satisfaction, that neither Violet nor he were late sleepers,—that they had met before at sunrise, and that to see the sun rise here Violet must leave her state-room, that being, as he had ascertained, on the western side of the ship.

Violet, too, had noticed this fact, and her last words to Wild had been, "Pray, wake me early! I want so much to see the sun rise from the sea, with no land in sight!"

Perhaps, if she had known how long the dash of the waves against the ship's side, arousing her old superstitious dread of the sea, would have kept her from sleep, she would not have desired to be disturbed so early. Certainly Wild, if she had known it, would not have awoke her while the morning star was still shining brightly. As it was, she began, as she laid her hand on her arm to arouse her,—"Miss Violet, I think you'd better sleep on; but, if you will get up, here's a bucket of water, and I'll just go outside, by the door, and you can call me when you want me."

"Thank you, dear, good nursey!" said Violet. "That cold, sparkling water is just the thing to wake me up. I will be ready in a few minutes, if this rolling ship will only let me get my things," she added.

"Here's everything, you want, Miss Violet. I got them out before I called you, and I fastened the frill in the neck of your morning-dress last night."

"Why, you dear old Wild! what shall I do without

you?" cried Violet playfully, receiving a gratified smile in return, as Wild closed the door of the state-room upon her; going into the saloon herself, and leaving her to her bath and her toilet. These were soon made, and Violet, opening her door, looked out for Wild. She was not in the saloon, but scarcely a minute had passed when she entered. There was something peculiarly lively in her countenance, which attracted Violet's attention.

"What has pleased you so, Wild? Is Papa Ross up?" she asked.

"No, ma'am; the cap'in is n't up; but, Miss Violet, I never seed nothing become you more than that morning dress."

This was evidently a device of Wild's to turn attention from herself; and yet it was quite true. That pearl-colored cachemere morning-dress, with its silk facing, and its little plaited frill around the neck, confined at the waist by a silk cord and tassels of the same color, was very becoming; and the little hood, under which the brown glittering curls would not "stay put," but would fall around the fresh young face, was perfectly bewitching. Violet was not insensible to their charms; she had just been admiring them in her little state-room glass; so she said, frankly, "I am glad you think so; but come, you are going with me on the deck. I should not like to go alone."

Wild looked irresolute; but Violet said, more decidedly, "Of course I cannot go without you;" and she turned and followed her, saying, as she went, "I did n't see nobody there, but one gentleman."

Even the one gentleman, to Violet's great satisfaction, had disappeared when she emerged from the cabin upon the deck. The east was all glowing with the coming of the great king of day, and the waves reflected its brightness so vividly that it was hard to tell where the sky ended and the sea began. Resting on the bulwarks, Violet looked over the wide waste of waters, which, spite of herself, gave

her a sad, dreary feeling, to this bright spot. Suddenly the broad disc of flaming light rose above the waves, and at the same moment she heard, in a low voice, near her,—a voice that trembled slightly,—"He said, Let there be light; and there was light."

These had been her own words on a like occasion, when only Mr. Devereux was present. With a bewildering doubt, hope, fear, she turned towards the speaker. Is it the sunlight which has suddenly flushed cheek and neck and brow with crimson? She meets the very eyes, the very look, which she met in her vision; and now, as then, she turns from them agitated, confused. But he draws near her; he bends down to her as she leans trembling upon the bulwarks; he says, still in that low, quivering voice, "You see, I remember almost the first words I heard from you; and have you forgotten me,—have you no word of greeting for me?"

She would give worlds to speak,—worlds, if she had them, that she had spoken, that she had not been so overpowered by that look,—but it is too late now! What can she say? How can she speak after *that?* And, bitterly humiliated, while she bends her head over the cold, dark waters, in which, for the moment, she would almost rejoice to hide her shame, he sees tears falling down the now pale cheek, which the little hood *will* not cover. But there is not a particle of the coxcomb in the man beside her. As he sees her agitation, her tears, he does not grow bold and triumphant, but regretful and angry with himself.

"Forgive me," he cries, "though I can hardly forgive myself for surprising you so. The pleasure of meeting you again made me forget that a lady's nerves cannot be expected to be quite so strong as those of an old campaigner, like myself; but now you *will* give me your hand, and say you are a little glad to see your old Squan Beach friend?"

The color begins to revisit her face; she places the little hand he covets so much in his, and says, falteringly, "I

was so surprised, — but I am very glad to see you, Mr. Devereux." She hopes the veil has not yet fallen. It may be replaced; and he is too wise to tear it rudely away. He knows that it creates just that *chiaro oscuro* which gives its most finished beauty to the picture he contemplates. Besides, unreasonable as it may seem, he is not secure; — this agitation certainly does not look like indifference; but, then, there are many gradations between indifference and the feeling he would win; and she is delicately sensitive, and the very perturbation of her spirit may be fatal to his suit; so he will wait a calmer moment. The mind forms its decisions often far more rapidly than language can express them; and she little suspects how important a question has been decided in the moment between her speaking and his turning to the scene before them, to point out some striking effects of light and shade. And then he speaks of the country through which he has travelled since he saw her; of Harper's Ferry, in Virginia, with its natural bridge and wildly-magnificent scenery; of the Falls of Tekoah, in the north-western part of Georgia, with their eleven hundred feet of precipitous descent; of Telulah, with its fairy fountains, in the same state; of the broad prairies of the West, a sea of verdure, then a solitude, but marked by nature as the home of a nation; and, as she listens, she grows interested, animated, and forgets herself. Capt. Ross finds them conversing thus; and, having given her his usual affectionate greeting, holds out his hand with a cordial good-morning to Mr. Devereux.

"You knew Mr. Devereux was on board?" Violet says, observing that there is no surprise manifested by either gentleman.

"Yes; I met him last night, after you had left me," Capt. Ross says, simply, though with a little smile, and a glance at Mr. Devereux, who turns away, probably that he may not meet it, and enters the cabin; but soon joins them again, bringing a bouquet, which he hands to Violet, with

a regret that some of the more delicate flowers are already fading.

"I should not have waited for this, Mr. Devereux, to remind me of the thanks I owe you for the beautiful flowers I have received so often," Violet says, while the memory of the dreams with which those flowers were associated brings a deeper flush to her cheek.

"I was sorry to hear from Miss Briôt that the sunshine and warm air sometimes escaped by the way," Mr. Devereux replies, with a gay laugh.

"Have you seen Miss Briôt, lately?" Violet looks up from the flowers she is admiring to ask.

"I spent a day with her at Ross Hall, less than a week ago."

"She must have heard, then, that we were going South," Violet remarks.

"Yes, she heard it while I was with her," he says; and Violet bends again over her flowers.

"Then he knew that *we* were here when he came on board. I wonder why he is going South again? Could it be in order to meet *us*?" Violet was careful to use the plural even in her thought. "But, then, why have *we* not seen him before?"

"Mr. Devereux, did I not understand you to say that you came North in the spring?" she questions, in a manner studiously careless, gazing while she speaks at some point afar off upon the waters.

"Yes," he answers; and then, glancing at Capt. Ross, who is pacing the deck, as if to measure the distance between them, he bends a little lower to say, almost in a whisper, "Will you permit me, when next I have an opportunity, to tell you how I have spent the summer, and why I did not get to Ross Hall sooner?"

The breakfast-bell rings, and Violet starts forward to the side of Capt. Ross, and passes her arm through his, seemingly impatient to obey the summons. Then, fearing she

had been rude to Mr. Devereux, lingers and looks back, as if expecting him to join them. She stops, too, at the door of her state-room, and begs them to excuse her while she puts her flowers in water. "Flowers are so precious at sea!" she says, as if she thought her care of them needed an apology.

Violet is the only lady at table, this morning. When she goes on deck again, she finds that some ladies, too feeble to sit up, have come out of their state-rooms while she was below, and are now reclining on settees; one of them with the little, pallid face of a sick child resting on the same pillow with hers. Their countenances showed real suffering, and Violet could not look on suffering without trying to relieve it. As she saw one after another wave away the untasted breakfast brought to them, she remembered the delicacies with which, in anticipation of such suffering on her part, Capt. Ross had provided her, and the simple remedies with which Dr. Jamieson had furnished her. She had a little consultation with Wild, and soon Mr. Devereux saw her flitting from couch to couch — an angel of mercy — tempting the appetite with more delicate viands than the ship's stores afforded, or offering restoratives where even these were rejected. Then she won the fretful baby, accustomed to be walked to sleep by a nurse who was now quite incapable of the effort, from the pale mother's side, and walked to and fro upon the deck with it, singing in a low, gentle voice to it, till it slept, when she laid it down again beside the mother, receiving her grateful smile as a reward. Then, as under her gentle cares one and another faint head was raised, she brought her flowers out, to give them, as she said, a breath from the shore. Though he held a book in his hand, Mr. Devereux's eyes followed her with admiration of her gentle grace, her womanly sympathy, and womanly tact.

"Did you ever read the flower-angels?" he asked, with

a smile, as she drew near him, in her round of self-imposed duties.

"Never. What is it?"

"A little German poem —"

"Which you will repeat for me when I am at leisure to hear it," she said, with a sweet simplicity, never dreaming of appropriating the title "flower-angel," which, in his heart, he had given her.

She soon became so popular among the children, that she could never be said to be at leisure till they had withdrawn for the night.

"I am practising for my vocation," she would say, with a cheerful smile, to Capt. Ross, as she gathered a bevy of them about her.

Mr. Devereux, much as he admired her in this new character, grew out of patience with children and parents, for engrossing her so entirely; nay, it had the effect of making him feel generally irritable, and not very much in charity with anybody. It was the afternoon of the second day of their voyage. There had been a little bustle on board on account of a scuffle between the second mate of the ship and a sailor, who had been frolicking before he left the shore, the captain said, and had not yet recovered from its effects. He had been overpowered, and, his hands being tied behind his back, he was made to lie down in one of the boats lashed alongside. His situation had excited the sympathy of the ladies very much; but the gentlemen were all on the side of lawful authority, and said he had been only too leniently treated. Mr. Devereux, to Violet's secret mortification, was particularly severe upon him. They were sailing along very briskly under a bright sky, but with a stiff breeze, and a sea that sent the water dashing over the bows of their ship, as she dipped gracefully down from the crest of the wave. Suddenly, Violet heard the thrilling cry, "Man overboard!" It came from Mr. Devereux, who ran through the cabin to the man at the wheel. The captain

was already there; and a few orders rapidly given, and as rapidly obeyed, soon checked the ship's headway. A boat descended, and Mr. Devereux was in her before she touched the water. Capt. Ross, who stood beside Violet, saw her turn very pale, and, putting his arm around her, made her lean upon him.

"I do not think there is any danger to those in the boat, my darling," he said, softly, to her, as he felt her trembling. She hid her face against his shoulder, but trembled still. It was no wonder, for it was hard to realize there was no danger to those who went in that small boat, that danced, like a child's toy, from wave to wave, — now seen, now hidden from their sight, and every moment receding further from the ship in which was all the help that could reach them in the whole world. But there was a smaller object than that boat to be seen, rising and sinking on those waves, — a human head, for the body is all submerged. The ship's captain stands on her bulwarks leaning on the cordage, and, with glass in hand, announces to the breathless crowd what is passing.

"I can see his head! the boat is steering straight for him! Now he's gone! — no, there he is again! If his hands were not tied behind his back, he would have gone down long ago; but, you see, that keeps him from throwing them up over his head. They're up with him! — no! What's the matter? The devil! The gentleman's jumped overboard! I don't see the man! Confound it! he's gone down, too!"

Violet had been gazing on the captain, as he uttered his observations, with a white face and straining eyes. The sharp agony in her face at this last announcement made Capt. Ross cry, "Who — who's gone down?"

"O, there he is! He must have seen the man sinking, and dived to catch him. Now he's seized the oar they hold out to him! They're hauling the man in! they've got him! I hope it is n't too late."

"And the gentleman?" cry many voices.

"O, he 's safe enough! He swims like a fish, and he 's in the boat now. There they come!"

Gentlemen and ladies crowded to the ship's side — all but Capt. Ross, who stood, supporting Violet, just where they had hitherto been. The man was lifted over the bulwarks, dripping, helpless, half-drowned, and carried silently below. Then there rises a cheer from every man on board, — from every *man*, whether he writes himself gentleman or sailor, — marking their brotherhood, springing from heart to heart, and lip to lip, — "Hurra! hurra! hurra!" — as Mr. Devereux sets his foot once more upon the deck; the loose coat, which he wore on board, and had thrown off, on jumping into the sea, lest it should embarrass his movements, the only thing about him that is not dripping. Gentlemen grasp his hands who had not spoken to him till then — who had perhaps called him, but an hour before, the surly Englishman; for, as we have said, he had not been in an amiable mood, and had not made himself agreeable. Yet more delicate, soft, warm hands are laid in his cold and dripping ones.

"You do me too much honor," he said, as he received these courtesies. "I was bound to do what I could for the man, as I might have prevented his plunge altogether, if I had not believed, in my uncharitableness, when I saw him make two unsuccessful attempts to spring from the boat, that it was all a ruse to excite our sympathy. I could not have held myself blameless, if he had been drowned."

While saying this he had been looking through the crowd for a face that was not there.

"Come, dearest: he is looking for you; he will be hurt, if you are the only one not to welcome him back," whispered Capt. Ross; and Violet yielded to the arm that drew her forward. But the crowd divided, for they saw where his eye was now fastened; and, with a delicacy for which he thanked them in his heart far more than for their hurras,

they withdrew as far aft as they could — an act suggested probably by some spirit of finer mould, but which none ventured to refuse.

He stood before her, and held out his hand. She laid in it both hers, all cold and trembling, and lifted to his her white face, from which the terror had not yet departed; but, though she parted the quivering lips, no word issued from them. But what need of words? That face told all — to him, to others. He felt it was so — felt that her womanly pride and delicacy were to be guarded now, not by his reserve, but by his fullest avowal of what she was to him. So, bending down, he pressed his lips to both the hands clasped in his, saying, in a voice whose low, earnest tone thrilled the deepest chord in her heart, "*My* Violet! God bless you! . Thank Him for me that I have not to answer for that man's life!"

Capt. Ross still supported her. He now laid his hand kindly on the shoulder of Mr. Devereux, saying, "Come, you must get off these wet clothes, or we shall have a case for the ship's surgeon. I am going to make Violet lie down for an hour or two: you had better do the same."

Capt. Ross went with Violet to her state-room. As he was leaving her, she caught his hand in hers, and said, softly, "Papa Ross!"

"What is it, Violet?" he asked, as he turned towards her again.

She threw her arm around his neck, and hid her face upon his bosom.

"Violet," he said, "I believe he is worthy of you, and I have given him my permission to win you."

His voice was calm. Violet thought it cold, and answered to what she believed was in his heart, "I will never leave you, Papa Ross! When Edward marries, you know, I may come to you again; and I will never leave you!"

"Make no rash promises, Violet! It is the law of nature that the old should be left." If the cold and hard marble should speak, it would be in such tones.

She raised her head; she lifted her eyes to his, and said, slowly and firmly, not with the fervor of an enthusiastic impulse, but with the calm yet emphatic utterance of a well-weighed resolve, "Papa Ross, you did not leave me in my desolate childhood: I will not leave you now. Nothing but the command of those to whom God gave me can ever come between us."

"And shall I tell Mr. Devereux this?" asked Capt. Ross, fixing his eyes searchingly on hers.

"If you please, Papa Ross." The voice did not falter, though the pale face became yet paler.

"Child! do you think me as selfish as those harpies on Squan Beach?" The coldness was gone from both heart and voice; the lips were quivering which he pressed to her cheek; and he looked at her through moist eyes, as he added, "Do not fear: we will not be long parted while we live, even though another may call you his. Mr. Devereux and I have talked of this already."

"And I will always be your child," she said, clinging to him still, as if to loose that embrace was to break the bond between them.

"Always my child, my Violet! So rest now, and be happy. I will come for you by and by."

And happy Violet was — happy as the self-indulgent, at the base of whose joys lie unfulfilled duties and sorrowing hearts, can never be. More than once, during the next two hours, did Mrs. Wild look into the little cabin, and always reported her sleeping; for she lay quite still, with her eyes closed, her small white hands folded on her bosom, and an expression of peace almost unearthly on her face.

The sun went down. The crimson glow faded from sea and sky, while

"—— the gray-hooded Even,
Like a sad votarist in palmer's weed,
Rose from the hindmost wheels of Phœbus' wain,"

and the shadow of her dusky robes fell around the ship.

"Are you asleep, Violet?" asked Capt. Ross, opening the state-room door.

"No, Papa Ross — neither asleep nor sleepy. So come in."

"No: I want you to come and take your evening walk on deck with me. The moon will be up soon."

To the deck, extending over the upper saloon, no lady but Violet had yet ventured. It was not even a favorite resort with many of the gentlemen, as the motion was of course greater there than on the lower deck. Yet to one who could walk there without dizziness it offered a promenade pleasanter and freer from obstructions than any other part of the ship. Thither Capt. Ross now led Violet. Three or four gentlemen were there, lounging on the benches, or leaning over the rail that ran around the deck, enjoying the Havanas which they could not smoke below, except by going forward. That stage of civilization which permits a gentleman to smoke without hesitation or apology in a lady's presence had not yet been attained in our country; and, as Violet appeared, every cigar was removed and thrown overboard, though Capt. Ross, at her request, assured the smokers that she was not annoyed by them, adding himself, "By keeping to windward, we shall not perceive them."

Each declared that it was the last cigar he intended smoking, and nearly finished; and, after a few observations on the pleasantness of the weather, the speed they were making, and the probable length of their voyage, — all topics of unfailing interest to voyagers, — they went below, some of them, perhaps, to finish in the forward part of the ship the interrupted smoke.

They went, but not all. Separated from the smokers, standing with folded arms in the stern, and looking down with abstracted gaze upon the foamy track which the ship left far behind her, was a tall form, whose dim outline only was discoverable through the dusky twilight. Dim as it was, Violet had recognized it at the first glance, and, with that strange shrinking from the very avowal for which her heart has long thirsted, so often manifested by a sensitive woman, she trembled as she saw the last of the strangers disappear below, and clung more closely to the arm of Capt. Ross. And so, trembling, dizzy, he draws her gently on towards that silent figure. As they come near, Mr. Devereux advances, and, taking the cold hand which Capt. Ross extends to him, raises it silently to his lips. Capt. Ross disengages his arm, saying, "Mr. Devereux would speak to you, my child; you will not refuse to hear him;" — then, as Mr. Devereux, drawing the hand he holds through his own arm, leads Violet to a seat and places himself beside her, he turns away, and, descending to the lower deck, paces for more than an hour the narrow strip that runs between the upper cabin and the ship's bulwarks.

And they are alone. For this hour he has waited long — in doubt, in sorrow, in bitter hopelessness. Impetuous passion bade him grasp the prize ere he had run the race; but honor, generosity, tenderness, had given other and wiser counsel. He had resisted, and subdued himself; he had risked his own happiness rather than trouble her peace; and he had his reward. The hour had come, and no shadow lay upon its brightness. With hand clasped in hand, and heart beating to heart, they could look to the heaven above them, and to the image of eternity around them, without apprehension, — nay, with a more spiritual and deeper joy, — feeling that the tie which united them was not for time alone.

For more than an hour, as we have said, did Capt. Ross continue his lonely pacings to and fro, holding conflict with

many a bitter and many a selfish thought, to which long indulgence had given power, but to which he had determined never again to yield. He was yet to learn more of his own weakness, to feel more the necessity of Divine help and guidance, ere the victory would be attained; but the conflict by which only peace could be won had begun. Often during his walk did he sound his repeater, time passed so slowly to him. At length it sounded the hour; it was ten o'clock, and he ascended the stairs to the upper deck. For a moment he stood there, a silent and unsuspected observer — not listener; for he was out of earshot, even had they spoken in their usual tones, instead of those low murmurs in which the deepest emotions ever utter themselves. It was a picture of peace and beauty such as earth seldom presents. The moon, now at its full, was flooding earth and sky with its soft, silvery light, and touching into more spiritual beauty the sweet face on which Capt. Ross so loved to look. That face was uplifted to Mr. Devereux's, with just that expression of tenderness chastened by timidity which he had often seen on his own Violet's. A quivering sigh burst from him at the remembrance it awakened. Mr. Devereux's face was in shadow, but Capt. Ross could see that their hands were linked together, that his other arm was around her, and that she rested confidingly in its clasp. He knew by this that the words had been spoken which pledged them to each other while life should last. His intentionally heavy tread called their attention to his presence before he approached them. Mr. Devereux rose immediately, and advanced a step or two to meet him, with extended hand.

"How shall I ever repay you, Capt. Ross," he said, "for this dear gift?" turning, as he spoke, to Violet, and clasping again the hand he had relinquished.

"By making her happy, sir," said Capt. Ross, tersely, it might almost have been thought with severity of accent.

"Her happiness will make so large a part of my own,

that you cannot doubt I shall do my best to secure it; but I already see that to make my efforts entirely successful I must have your aid; she has in the last hour twice reminded me that she will not cease to be your child in becoming my wife."

Violet had placed her other hand in that of Capt. Ross, and he felt the thrill which that last word sent quivering through her frame. He bent down to kiss her cheek, saying, "I think I must exercise a little parental authority now, and take her down stairs with me. She has had a great deal of excitement to-day, and needs rest."

Capt. Ross gave Mr. Devereux no time to object, if he were disposed to do so; but, holding out his hand with a good-night to him, turned away, that he might be no restraint on their parting, and advanced to the stairs, where he paused and awaited the coming of Violet.

"Are you, too, going to rest immediately, Capt. Ross," asked Mr. Devereux, as they rejoined him; "or may I say a few words to you here, when you have parted with Violet?"

"I will return," Capt. Ross answered.

Having accompanied Violet to her state-room and bidden her good-night, he was about to fulfil this promise; but Violet held him back a moment, to whisper, "Tell him he must get my mother's consent, Papa Ross; she has done nothing to forfeit her child's respect and affection, and, if we should not fulfil our duty to her, how could we ask God to bless us?"

Capt. Ross did not answer immediately, and she added, softly, "You will tell him, Papa Ross, will you not?"

"I will tell him what you say—yes," replied Capt. Ross, musingly, and then turned away and went slowly up to Mr. Devereux, debating all the way, not what was Violet's duty, or even what would best secure her happiness in the question she had suggested, but—so inveterate are habits of thought and feeling long indulged—what would occasion the shortest separation between her and himself.

In the rapid sketch made by his thoughts, the affair stood thus: Violet's immediate marriage to Mr. Devereux and departure for England would most completely foil the attempts of Dick Van Dyke or his brother ruffians; and it was an unconfessed dread of these attempts, more than anything else, perhaps, which had reconciled him to the thought of her marriage with a foreigner. On the other hand, if her marriage should be postponed until the spring, he could accompany her to England; and in the mean time the gloom of his lonely return to the home of his childhood would be lightened by his occasional visits to her in Sunbury. Edward, too, should Miss Peyton accept him, which Miss Briôt appeared to think almost a certainty, might be married, and ready to take his place in the spring. And was there in reality any danger in Sunbury, a village whose name was hardly known out of the state to which it belonged, whither no travellers resorted, and where the only vessel ever seen was a sloop coming two or three times in a year, to bring Yankee notions, onions, apples, potatoes, and to carry back in return cotton and rice from the neighboring plantations. It will easily be seen that the balance preponderated on the side of delay in Violet's marriage; and Capt. Ross accordingly delivered her message with all due emphasis, and urged the necessity to her happiness of a compliance with all that her conscience dictated.

"Then I shall return in the first ship that sails from Savannah to New York. It may be an affair of months, should I send a letter to Squan Beach; besides, my friend Katy," — he paused, and bit his lips, remembering that she was Violet's mother. "I must go, of course," he resumed, "and I shall lose no time. Meanwhile, what is my loss will be your gain," he concluded, more cheerfully, evidently supposing that Violet was to be with Capt. Ross, — an impression which the latter did not attempt to correct. Her engagement appeared, to Capt. Ross, to make such a complete change in her circumstances, as to render it no long-

necessary that she should abide strictly by the letter of her promise to Katy.

"My dear child," he said to her, the next morning, "do you not perceive that these restrictions were only intended to prevent the possibility of any renewal of the plan so cherished by me, and regarded with so little favor by any one else? Your engagement, and Edward's attachment to another, render this no longer feasible; and your mother herself, were she here, would tell you that no precautions were necessary against that which is in itself impossible."

"I dare say she would, Papa Ross; but, having made a promise in positive terms, do you think we have a right to set it aside because we believe that it was intended to meet certain conditions no longer existing?"

"Why, what a casuist you are!" exclaimed Capt. Ross, half amused and half annoyed at her mode of stating the question.

"Am I?" she asked, with a laugh. "You see, I thought a great deal of this, last night. I began by believing that I might go with you, provided Mrs. Baillie would let me off from my engagement with her; but, the more I thought, the more I felt that the simple, right thing for me was to keep my promise till my mother should free me from it."

There was a little sadness in her tone, and Capt. Ross asked, "Are you sorry for it?"

The quick tears rushed to her eyes, though she tried to smile, as she said, "I do not like to tell you how sorry; it would be so delightful to go with you, and have nothing to do but to be happy all the time!"

"But I thought you liked your work so much?"

"So I did, because I had some things that troubled me, and I was afraid, if I were idle, I should think of them a great deal, and grow discontented and ungrateful But now —" Violet stopped; but the sudden silence said more than any words could have done of the happiness of NOW.

"And have you told Mr. Devereux of this new character of governess in which you design to come out?"

"No; I forgot it last night, and I have had no opportunity this morning."

"Well, here he comes, and you had better do it at once. My own impression is that he will not particularly like it."

And, abstractly stated, he certainly would not; but, when Violet told her own story, and, through a thousand pretty hesitations and "innocent shames," let him see the difference between *now* and *then*; and when, through all her girlish simplicity, he perceived still the heroic spirit following the voice of truth and duty through rough and uninviting paths, — the very spirit which had made him cry shame on his own indolent and self-indulgent life, — he found so much to admire that he forgot to object. Even when he talked it over with Capt. Ross, apart from the influence of her presence, though more worldly modes of thought resumed their influence over him, and he acknowledged that he regretted the engagement, he added, "But her views of it are far higher and purer than mine; and, if I cannot yet rise, as I hope one day to do, to her sphere, I will, at least, not attempt to drag her down to my own."

"It will be but a little while that you will be engaged in the delectable employment of teaching young ideas to shoot. One hour at Squan Beach will be all I shall want. In three or four weeks I shall go and return."

"Go!" exclaimed Violet. "Are you going? Will you not spend the winter at the South, with Papa Ross?"

"And occasionally drop in at Mrs. Baillie's, to see you playing the school-ma'am? Excuse me!" and, spite of all his determinations, a look of pride passed over his face; but it gave way to one all tenderness, as he added, "I will spend the winter where you please, when once I have secured this little hand, and can call you all my own."

Three days more they were on the sea, no longer dreary to Violet. On the fourth they arrived in Savannah. Mr.

Devereux found, on inquiry, that a ship would sail for New York the next day, and that the Garonne would be ready for her return voyage in a week. He determined to wait for the latter vessel, as Capt. Ross kindly offered to remain in Savannah, with Violet, while he was there. We will not linger on the enjoyments of this happy week. The last day, the last hour, came, and they parted.

To the young heart, with its vivid imagination, its quick impulses, and its keen sense of pleasure and of pain, those partings are very bitter things; and Violet vainly schooled herself, and told herself it was babyish, it was silly, to weep for a separation of a few weeks — the tears would come. Each one of them was more precious to Mr. Devereux than the diamond which glittered in the ring he placed upon her finger, at parting, though that might well have excited the admiration of a better judge of its value than Mr. Spriggins.

Capt. Ross had accompanied Mr. Devereux on board. When he returned, Violet met him with a cheerful face; and he rewarded her by speaking of Mr. Devereux with the admiration and affectionate interest with which he had learned to regard him.

"It was quite amusing to see how he was welcomed by the old tars. Every one seemed to remember him, and to have a respectful greeting for him."

"Was the man there whose life he saved?" asked Violet.

"No. I asked the captain what had become of him, and he said he had begged to go back in the ship that left the day after we arrived; and, as he was a little afraid of his getting into another frolic here, he had let him go. He thinks that ship must have been in New York in four days, as she had a steady south-wester all the time. I hope Devereux may be as fortunate."

Mrs. Wild was in the room during some part of this conversation, and, when Capt. Ross had gone out, she said to Violet, "Well, ma'am, I have heard of inquisitive people,

but I must say that man that Mr. Devereux picked up when he was half drownded was the inquisitivest man that ever I seed. He thought a deal of you, though, Miss Violet. He said you was so pretty he 'd go a thousand miles, any time, to see you; and he asked me all about where you was a going, and how *fur* Sunbury was, and Mrs. Baillie's name, and all, because as how, he said, he might come there just to take a look at you. He was a funny man!"

The next morning, Capt. Ross, Violet, and Mrs. Wild, left Savannah for Sunbury, in a hired carriage. Their introduction to the latter place we leave for another chapter.

27*

CHAPTER XI.

> "Dear, lovely bowers of innocence and ease,
> Seats of my youth, when every sport could please,
> How often have I loitered o'er thy green,
> Where humble happiness endeared each scene!"
>
> GOLDSMITH.

> "They raise the ready sail with guilty haste,
> And fly in terror o'er the pathless waste."
>
> CRABBE.

IMAGINE a collection of houses, fifty at most, built of wood, two stories in height, of the simplest architecture, giving generally four rooms on a floor, with wide piazzas in the front and rear; place these houses, not in rows on each side of a street, but rather as if each was intended to guard one side of a great square; attach to them large yards, containing a smaller house, furnishing sleeping-rooms for the servants, as well as a kitchen, laundry, and other offices; add to these a garden, where flowers, fruits, and culinary vegetables, flourish in the proportions and arrangement suggested by the taste of the owner, — and you have all of the little town of Sunbury which man had made. It had no inn, for it lay out of the direct line of travel, and few came there except to visit some acquaintance to whose hospitable entertainment he might always trust himself. A large, square, white building, nearly in the centre of the town, was the academy. It would have furnished recitation-rooms for three or four hundred, according to the modern system of crowding; and gave abundant space to the one hundred and fifty, or two hundred at most, who resorted thither from twenty, thirty, forty, or even fifty miles around,

to avail themselves of the instruction of its far-famed principal, — of whom more anon. Further back, within view of the green belt of forest trees which bounded the town on the west, stood the church. In its wide galleries were displayed on Sundays the dark faces and white teeth of "Afric's sons and daughters," whose powerful and not unmelodious voices completely gained the mastery, in the musical parts of the service, over those of the white congregation seated below.

So simple, and so poor, were man's works in that little town; but how shall we paint the exquisite beauty with which the Creator's hand had clothed it? The broad arm of the sea on which it was seated swept boldly up between an island of verdure on the one side and the main land on the other, and, stretching north and south, half encircled the little town in its embrace. Rising from the bright waters, by an easy slope, to the height of some thirty or forty feet, it spread on every side into an unbroken plain, covered with a carpet of the softest and greenest velvet ever laid by Nature's "cunning hand."

Violet was enchanted at the view, and could hardly be persuaded to enter the large, ancient-looking house standing near the water, and looking directly towards the sea, where the carriage had stopped, and which Capt. Ross announced as Mrs. Baillie's. But the front door opens, and Mrs. Baillie comes out upon the piazza herself, to welcome the visitors, though she knows not yet who they are. She comes forward quite to the steps, a kind, friendly-faced, elderly lady, with a figure tending considerably to embonpoint. A little nearer the door, but still in the piazza, is a young lady, with nothing very striking in her appearance, but with a pleasing, animated face, and a good figure. It is Miss Louisa Baillie. Further back, within the hall, but still visible through the open door, are two little girls, — Violet's pupils *expectant*, — peering forth with curious yet timid looks.

It is a quarter of a century since the elders of this party have met; yet, after a moment's hesitation, Mrs. Baillie, grasping the outstretched hand of Capt. Ross, and presenting her cheek for his kiss, cries out, "Why, it 's Cousin Ross, I declare! And this," she adds, turning to Violet, and bestowing a hearty shake of the hand and kiss upon her, "must be Miss Van Dyke. We are very glad to see you, my dear."

Violet felt assured she was not to suffer from the unkindness of her employers, in her character of governess.

Louisa came forward, and repeated the welcome, with a manner a little less demonstrative, from timidity, but evidently with purposes equally kind.

"Come, walk in! O, here is another lady! Cousin Ross, pray introduce me!" exclaimed Mrs. Baillie, looking a little worried at the thought that she might have seemed to fail in hospitality, as Mrs. Wild, who had been seeing to the safety of such small articles of baggage as had come with them in the carriage, approached.

"This is Mrs. Wild," said Capt. Ross, smiling. "She was my son's nurse, and has remained with me since, as my housekeeper."

"I am very glad to see Mrs. Wild, I am sure," said hospitable Mrs. Baillie, offering her hand to Wild, who had to drop two bags and a basket to accept it. The assurance, we are afraid, was more kind than truthful; for how to entertain a nurse and a housekeeper, who was yet a very respectable-looking white person, presented about as puzzling a question to good, kind Mrs. Baillie as any with which she had ever had to deal. The good sense of Wild settled it at once. Hanging back a little as the others entered the drawing-room, to which they were all invited, she said, "If you please, ma'am, to let some one show me Miss Violet's and the captain's rooms, I 'll put their things away."

"O, yes, Mrs. Wild!" cried Mrs. Baillie; and, going

through the hall to the back piazza, she called loudly for "Nancy! Nancy!"

Mrs. Wild, having followed the good lady, with some distress at the thought of how much trouble she was giving her, saw a young black girl, with a face shining like polished ebony, coming from the kitchen to the house, with a very leisurely step. Mrs. Baillie waited on the slow movement like one accustomed to it, only saying, as the girl approached her, "Come, Nancy; you 're keeping Mrs. Wild waiting. I want you to show her to the stranger's room, where Cousin Ross will sleep. See that everything is ready for him, Nancy."

"Yes, ma'am; but you know de pitcher in de stranger room is broke."

"Dear! dear! You are so careless, Nancy! When was that done?" cried Mrs. Baillie.

"Oye, missis! he done long time ago!" said Nancy, with a smile, which seemed to express that all action in this case was barred by the statute of limitations; and so Mrs. Baillie appeared to think; for, without further investigation, she replied, "Well, you must go to the store, and get another. If you can't get a pitcher by itself, you must get the basin too. I 'll engage you won't be long before you 'll make a place for it by breaking a basin!"

Nancy showed her teeth in a broad smile, but did not answer. She doubtless thought the supposition very probable.

"And, now, take those things from Mrs. Wild, and show her to the room which I told you to get ready for Miss Van Dyke. There are two beds in it, Mrs. Wild, and perhaps Miss Van Dyke would have no objection,"—here Mrs. Baillie suddenly thought that the suggestion of an objection as possible was not respectful to Mrs. Wild, and she changed her phraseology to "I mean, perhaps you would not dislike—or, rather, that neither you nor Miss Van Dyke would object to sleep in one of them."

"Not at all, ma'am," said Mrs. Wild, curtseying, with an intense determination to be civil, yet greatly puzzled to know, at last, who was to sleep in the one bed, Violet or herself, and what was to become of the one not thus provided for.

As Mrs. Wild followed Nancy up stairs, Mrs. Baillie turned towards the parlor-door; but had gone a very few steps when she turned back, and, calling Nancy, who leaned over the balustrade of the stairs to receive her communication, told her to run to the kitchen and tell Peggy to hurry the tea, as Cousin Ross and Miss Van Dyke must be almost famished. Tea might have seemed, to the uninitiated, a somewhat unsubstantial provision for famishing people; but they would probably have changed their opinion when the meal so denominated was spread out before them. There were two dishes of meat, — broiled chickens and cold ham, — with hominy, waffles, wafers and biscuits, sweet cakes and marmalade, besides tea and coffee.

It was at this meal that Violet first saw the children whom she had come to teach. They were bright, intelligent-looking children, though not particularly pretty.

"Go and speak to Miss Van Dyke, my dears," said Mrs. Baillie, as they came shyly in to the table.

The direction had the effect of making them drop their heads and sheer off a little further from Violet. Louisa stooped down and whispered to the little Georgy, who thereupon began to edge herself, as it were, nearer and nearer to Violet, till, getting quite near, she suddenly laid a little, fat, dimpled hand on hers, cried, "How d' ye," and then, jerking it as suddenly away, ran back to her sister, saying, "I do it, Lou! I do it!"

Louisa took her on her lap, kissed her, and, drawing the sugar-bowl to her, selected the largest lump and put it into Georgy's chubby hand, while Mrs. Baillie said, "Georgy 's a good girl to do what mamma tells her."

"She do it for sugar, though!" said Harriet, her powers

of discrimination probably sharpened by perceiving that praise to Georgy was intended as blame to her.

"And you will do it from kindness?" said Violet, as she held out her hand to Harriet; adding, "You look like a little friend I made on board the ship in which I came here. I hope you will be my little friend, too!"

Harriet did not refuse the proffered hand, and, drawing her to her side, Violet kissed her. The little heart was gained, and the only difficulty now was to induce her to leave Violet's side, or to permit her to give a moment's attention to any one but herself. Georgy's good-humor did not continue long. She wanted to make her supper — or tea, for the meal consisted of both — on ham. This her mother opposed, though she set no limit to her indulgence in hot biscuits, sweet cakes, or marmalade. Perhaps the ham acquired a new charm from the prohibition. Certain it is the young rebel would be satisfied with nothing else; and, after pouting and sulking for some time, burst into passionate weeping, on seeing the coveted dish removed from table.

"Call Ma'am Phœbe to take Miss Georgy away," said Mrs. Baillie to the black girl that waited on table. She went quickly out, and soon returned, followed by a tall negress, somewhat past middle age, dressed in a skirt of striped cotton and a bodice of coarse muslin, made large and loose, with a drawing-string confining it around the waist, below which it hung in a frill nearly a half-yard deep. Her head was tied with a checkered cotton handkerchief, made to set high on the top of the head, while the ends were tied in front and spread out on each side, like little wings. The moment Ma'am Phœbe entered, Georgy ceased her roars, and went off in her arms as quiet as a lamb.

"I see, Cousin Hetty," said Capt. Ross to Mrs. Baillic, with a smile, awakened by old memories, —"I see your children are as obedient to Ma'am Phœbe as you and I used to be to Ma'am Hagar."

"O, yes! she can do a great deal more with the little ones than I can."

Violet soon found that these were not words of course; that "Ma'am Phœbe" was often called in to quell disturbances with which Mrs. Baillie found herself unequal to cope. This puzzled her until she saw how completely children, while very young, were left to the guardianship of their colored nurses; and till she observed that the only fault in Mrs. Baillie's children which never escaped punishment of some kind was disrespect to their "maumer," as "Ma'am Phœbe" was called, or, indeed, to any of the older negroes.

After tea Mrs. Baillie proposed that, if Violet were not too much wearied by her journey, Louisa should take a walk with her, and show her something of the town. Capt. Ross said he would like to accompany them, and introduce Violet to some of his old haunts when he was a school-boy attending the academy here. Going to her room to put on her bonnet and shawl, Violet found Wild there taking her tea. Mrs. Baillie had wished her to come to the table; but Wild had begged so pathetically that she might not be asked to sit down with "the captain," that a tray had been sent to her room. Violet, in pity to her loneliness, now proposed that she should go out with them.

"I would like it very much, Miss Violet," said Wild, after a little hesitation, "if you 'll jest let me carry your shawl, or something, that I may n't look as if I was a taking airs."

Poor Wild was beginning to feel her anomalous position in a land where servants were not only of a distinct caste, but of a distinct race.

The walkers found no pavements, but trod on the green, velvety turf. Violet was delighted with this; but Wild prudently suggested that it would probably be often damp, and was, therefore, she should think, not so healthy.

"I do not think you will often find a town healthier than

this," said Louisa, tenacious of the good repute of her native place.

"I observe," said Violet, "that you speak of Sunbury as a town. Is it not rather a village?"

"No; it is a regularly-incorporated town, and has, what all towns have not, a history," said Capt. Ross.

"Pray, let me hear it," said Violet, passing her arm through his.

"I must begin by an acknowledgment that will not please Louisa, I am afraid."

"If you mean that Sunbury has decreased in importance, you are mistaken in supposing that your saying it will not please me. I like to hear of its past glories," said Louisa, laughing, yet coloring with more earnest feeling than she would have liked to express.

"Well, then, it was formerly a place of greater size; a great resort in the summer, on account of its healthy situation, not only to the families from the neighboring plantations, but even to persons from a much greater distance. There was a court-house here, stores were built down on those wharves, and large ships frequently unloaded there."

"And what has caused the decline?" asked Violet.

"Several reasons have been assigned. The principal one probably is, that the ships only *unloaded* here. The exports furnished by the neighboring country bore no proportion to the imports. But do you know the name of the county in which you are?"

"Liberty County; is it not?" asked Violet.

"Yes," answered Louisa, with a kindling eye and glowing cheek. "So called because it was the first in the state that declared for the liberty party, in the Revolutionary times."

"Louisa, I see, would make a better historian than I," said Capt. Ross, smiling at her ardent yet not unfemini[ne] enthusiasm.

"O, no! pray, go on!" Louisa exclaimed; and he resumed:

"Do you see those little hillocks, yonder, just beyond the southern end of the town, where the river makes that sweep?"

"Yes; I see."

"Those are the remains of a fort which was twice taken and twice retaken during the Revolutionary War. The last time it was held by my old friend, General, then Colonel, M——, as true and gallant a soldier as ever lived. He had but a small force, and only three rounds of ammunition for his men, when two vessels were seen approaching, bearing the red cross of St. George. They had been sent from Savannah, then in the hands of the British, with a force deemed sufficient for the reduction of this fort. The ships hove to and sent a boat in with a flag, demanding the surrender of the fort. The veteran soldier, who had never surrendered to an enemy before, could not make up his mind to do it now without a struggle, and answered the demand with the laconic 'Come and take it!' The British officer commanding the expedition thought that nothing but a force that gave assurance of victory could inspire such a confident reply; and, deeming it imprudent, under such circumstances, to hazard an attack, sailed away without firing a shot."

"I am glad I did not live in Revolutionary times; and that I was too young, in our last war with England, to know anything about it. I think I should have been sorry, whichever party conquered," said Violet.

"And I," exclaimed Louisa, "would rather we should be successful in combat with England than with any power in the world."

"And why?" asked Capt. Ross, as he looked, not without interest, upon her glowing face.

"Because she is the noblest of all nations, and it would be the greatest glory to conquer her," answered the animated girl.

"But would not England and America both achieve a higher glory by a friendly union? Think what these two free Christian nations might do for the world; what a noble part they might act; how they might hasten the reign of peace on earth and good-will to men!" said Violet.

There was scarcely more contrast in sentiment than in manner between these two young girls. Louisa, all fire and frankness, speaking with the enthusiasm of one who had had no cause to doubt herself or others, who would throw down her gauntlet to the world in defence of her opinions. Violet, who had been taught, in early childhood, that her impulses must submit to the mastery of duty, equally frank, but less self-confident; with less warmth of manner, but even deeper tenderness of heart, and an earnestness in cleaving to what she had accepted as truth, which, however gently it might express itself, was steadfast as the infinite and eternal sources from which it drew its life, and compared with the impetuosity of Louisa as the pure, unchanging radiance of a fixed star does with the lurid flash of a meteor. Their looks at this moment fitly expressed these different types of character. Louisa held her head proudly erect, as if the majesty of America was to be sustained by her; while her cheeks glowed, and her eyes flashed on those around her, seeming to challenge contradiction, and to be ready to contend for victory. Violet's cheek scarcely deepened in color. You might almost have believed, at one time, that it grew paler, as if she had been awed at the vision of the responsibilities of these great nations; and her eyes grew darker and deeper, wearing rather the expression of one who communed with her own heart and with Heaven than of one who contended for earthly victories.

"Why, Cousin Ross, you are not thinking of going to-day?" cried Mrs. Baillie, the next morning, entering the parlor, where he sat with Violet, giving her some parting directions. He replied by assuring Mrs. Baillie that it w
very important he should be at home as early as possibl

"But surely you can stay one day to meet your old friends? I have sent Nancy now to invite Dr. and Mrs. Sanderson, and Mrs. Coles, — nobody ever thinks of asking him, — and Mr. and Mrs. Tell, and Miss Nancy Babbage ——"

"Is Miss Nancy alive yet?" Capt. Ross asked, with some interest.

"Alive! To be sure she is, and as good as ever; and she will be so sorry not to see you! And, then, there 's Dr. O'Flynn and his wife ——"

"Dr. O'Flynn to be here! Then I must stay; for I would not have Violet introduced to him, without my being with her, for a great deal."

"Why?" asked Violet. "Is he so terrifying, or so fascinating, or what?"

"Wait till you have seen him, and then you shall decide the question for yourself, and thank me — as I know you will be ready to do then — for having stayed."

"You must take the first instalment of my thanks now, however," said Violet. "I should be glad and thankful for it, if there were no Dr. O'Flynn in the world."

That day, Mrs. Baillie and Ma'am Phœbe were nearly all the morning shut up in the large pantry, in the rear of the dining-room; and Violet found all her fascinations as a story-teller, and even the exertion of her lately-assumed authority, scarcely sufficient to prevent Harriet and Georgy from prying into the mystery of their labors. Dinner was this day served at two o'clock, a half-hour earlier than usual; and, as soon as it was over, Mrs. Baillie, having requested Ma'am Phœbe to see that both the dining-room and drawing-room were put in order, advised Violet to dress, as the ladies would come about four o'clock.

"And, mind, maumer," she added to Ma'am Phœbe, "I shall want you to dress the children, and to be ready to help Nancy hand the tea."

At half-past three, Mrs. Baillie and Louisa tapped at

Violet's door, on their way down stairs, to inquire if she was ready. To Wild, who opened the door for them, Mrs. Baillie said, deprecatingly, "I hope, Mrs. Wild, you will not be hurt. I assure you, I should be very glad to see you down stairs. — My dear, how sweetly you look" — gladly turning from the embarrassing subject of Mrs. Wild's claims — "in that delicate Quaker silk, and those pretty thin folds — lace, are n't they? — around your neck! It is very becoming, I assure you."

"And, mamma," exclaimed Louisa, "is n't her hair beautiful? It curls naturally, too. Why, it can't be any trouble at all. See, she just twists this in her comb behind, and lets the rest hang around her face; and I have so much trouble with mine!" And Louisa touched the heavy braids of her own glossy and abundant but straight hair. A self-styled wisdom may cry "Fudge!" to these simple, childish words; but there is a quality better deserving the name, which, seeing the generous, kindly heart beneath them, would love the fair speaker, as Violet felt that she did at that moment, and would understand Wild's curtsey and "Thank you, ma'am!" better than Mrs. Baillie did, who supposed them a return for her polite expressions, and answered, "Not at all, Mrs. Wild."

Mrs. Baillie herself was attired in a sort of second mourning, which she still wore, and should always wear, she said, for her deceased husband, — a black silk dress, and plain white collar. As for Louisa, she quite fascinated Wild in a white muslin, with floating blue ribbons.

At four, the ladies began to assemble, each bringing her knitting or needle-work, and applying herself so industriously to it, that Violet, ashamed of her idleness, stole up stairs, and insisted on carrying off some of the fine wristbands which Wild was stitching for Edward's shirts. The employment of the fingers did not, however, impede the exercise of the tongue with any of the company; and Violet, if she made good use of her ears, knew more, ere the afternoon

closed, of the absent inhabitants of the little town, than she was likely to learn from many weeks of personal intercourse with them. It is quite wonderful how universal, in all climes and ages, has been the opinion that

"The proper study of mankind is man."

About five o'clock, Capt. Ross, who had gone out for a walk, returned, and was greeted as an old friend by those who remembered him only as a school-boy. They had been girls when he was a boy; and there was an unworldliness and simplicity in their greetings and their memories of the past which greatly pleased Violet. Many questions were asked of her relationship to him, which he answered always by saying she was his adopted daughter. For some time he managed to evade any other inquiries; but at length one lady, more persevering or bolder than the rest, found an unguarded moment in which to express her surprise that his adopted daughter should become a governess. For a moment his cheek reddened, and he drew himself up, showing that he was still the Capt. Ross of Ross Hall; but he could not maintain his stiffness with these simple-hearted people, who seemed themselves, to possess in old age, all the frankness and affectionateness of childhood; and he answered, laying his hand on Violet's shoulder, and meeting her smile with another, "You must ask her about that, — it was her plan, not mine. But it will not be for very long, I suspect. She has another engagement on hand, which will interfere with this one."

Violet's blush and downcast eyes gave all the explanation which his words needed; and the good lady soon left them, to disseminate the important information that Miss Van Dyke was engaged to be married, and would not be long a governess.

But the gentlemen now began to enter, and Violet was on the watch for Dr. O'Flynn, whose wife, one of the most pleasing women in the room, had assured Mrs. Baillie, in her hearing, that he would come as soon as he had dismissed

the school, at five o'clock. It was nearly six when he arrived; and, having shaken hands with Mrs. Baillie and Capt. Ross, greeting the latter very heartily, as one of "his boys," he bowed to the rest of the company, and asked immediately to be introduced to Mrs. Baillie's governess.

"You must not call her by so formidable a name, Doctor, or you will frighten her. She is to me as my own daughter, and this being a governess is just a little piece of female Quixotism."

"I am disposed to think, sir, that the only Quixotism in the world, now, is of the feminine gender; from which fact the conclusion is inevitable, that it will soon die out altogether," said Dr. O'Flynn, with a merry twinkle in his eye, and a laugh in his voice, which was by no means free of the brogue. But, the laugh over, he returned to his purpose, and asked again to be introduced to Violet, who had never ceased to observe him, from the moment of his entrance.

Let us take a glance at him, while Capt. Ross is leading him up to Violet, and giving the introduction he has twice asked. We see a bald, shining head, fringed around by hair of perfect whiteness; a forehead not high, but prominent, jutting over small gray eyes, that could sparkle with the drollest humor or flash with passion; a face thickly-pitted with the small-pox; a nose that had been, by some accident, deprived of the elevation which nature had designed for it, except just at the nostrils, and lips of unusual thickness. And yet, hideous as this portraiture may seem, there was such admirable intelligence in that face, such merriment generally in the eye, that few looked in it without a sentiment of liking, unless it was the poor truant or idler at school, who read there the coming sorrow. For such, Dr. O'Flynn knew no mercy. On another class he was almost equally severe, — the literary pretender, — especially the pretender who offered himself as a teacher. Having been educated himself at the University of Antrim, in his native land, Dr. O'Flynn did not hold American schol-

arship in general in very high repute; and, considering himself, apparently, as the appointed guardian of the fountains of learning in that part of the country in which Providence had cast his lot, he thought it no less his duty than his privilege to examine every candidate for the important office of instructing youth that ventured within his circle. It was an office which he must have deemed very important; for he had relinquished for it that of the ministry, to which he had been regularly ordained. One of these examinations was a curious scene, though to the unlucky wight himself who was undergoing it by no means agreeable. The doctor generally chose for it some public occasion, well knowing that his rule as literary autocrat was so thoroughly established that none would venture to interfere between him and his subject, or to dispute his verdict. It was in this spirit, and to meet our poor, unsuspecting Violet, that he had come to Mrs. Baillie's this evening. He expected to meet a lady who would sit erect on her chair, talk like a book, and smile by rule; and he found a pretty, graceful girl, whose color came and went almost with every breath, and whose unpretending manner nearly disarmed him. Taking his seat beside her, he began by saying, "I understand, Miss Van Dyke, that you are about to undertake the responsible and highly honorable office of an instructress of youth."

"Only these two little children, sir," said Violet, deprecatingly.

"But, are you aware, my dear young lady, that little children may imbibe false impressions, that will be stumbling-blocks to them all their lives?"

"I have been so carefully taught, sir," said Violet, looking modestly down, "that I hope I shall not teach them what is false."

"Well, now, let us see," cried Dr. O'Flynn, bending forward, with a look around the circle which claimed and received instant attention, every voice being hushed, and all

waiting with the most earnest expectation for his next sentence. Poor Violet would scarcely have been able to endure it, and might, probably, have obeyed the impulse to spring up and run away up stairs to Wild; but she felt a hand upon her shoulder, and, looking up, met the smiling face of Capt. Ross.

"Let us see," resumed Dr. O'Flynn, as he saw that his auditors were prepared for his commencement; "we will begin very low down on the ladder. Can you tell me, now, what is the difference between the subject and the predicate of a sentence?"

No, indeed — we doubt if Violet could have told, at that moment, the difference between her right hand and her left; but Capt. Ross was ready for the doctor.

"Certainly, Doctor, she can! You will not doubt her grammar or rhetoric, when you know that I taught her, after your own method."

"The method may have been very good, but I am not so sure of the teacher, sir. If I remember rightly, you could better have taught her the difference between a kite and a ball."

"Why, Doctor, this is positive defamation of character!" said Capt. Ross, though he laughed with the rest at the doctor's hit. "Come, Violet, give me that chair. It is I, and not you, who am on examination."

Violet rose, and, gliding into her chair, Capt. Ross passed his arm around her waist, and kept her standing beside him, while he underwent the doctor's half-playful, half-earnest inquisition, mingled with keen strokes of wit. When he saw that Violet, supported by him, and no longer the object of undivided attention, had recovered her self-possession, he managed to draw her into the play, now and then, in a manner which made a favorable impression on the doctor and on the company.

"And you say," remarked Dr. O'Flynn, at last, "that this young lady does not teach as a necessity: may I ask, then, why she does it?"

"Ah! she must tell you that, herself," said Capt. Ross, looking at her with a mischievous expression which Violet had not supposed his features capable of wearing. It seemed to her that this return to the scenes of his boyhood had given him back his boyish spirit. But Dr. O'Flynn addresses his question to her, and must be answered.

"Only," says Violet, with a blush and a smile, "because I did not want to be quite idle."

"And could you not be satisfied with that woman's work?" asks Dr. O'Flynn, touching the wristband she holds in her hand.

"I could only do it for myself, as I could not at present be with Papa Ross and my brother Edward; and I have nobody else to work for;"—her lip quivering with a regretful thought of her mother at Squan Beach.

"And why not work for yourself? Young ladies generally find enough to satisfy them in doing that."

"Do they, sir? I think not. It is better than to be idle, certainly; but I think even young ladies were made for something better than that."

She spoke playfully, but Dr. O'Flynn saw the deeper thought through her badinage, and, rising from his seat and offering her his hand, exclaimed, warmly, "I honor you, Miss Van Dyke! You are worthy to be a teacher. I congratulate you, madam,"—to Mrs. Baillie,—"on such an acquisition!"

This important scene so pleasantly finished, Mrs. Baillie went out, simpering and smiling as if she had received the doctor's compliments, instead of Violet, to send in Nancy and Ma'am Phœbe, both dressed for the occasion, bearing, the former a tray with tea and coffee, and the latter one with every variety of bread, cake, and sweetmeat, that could well be crowded upon it.

We may not dwell upon this brief episode in the life of Violet. It recurred to her in after years like the reading of some pastoral poem, unexciting, but pleasant. The love-

liness of the scene, the refreshing simplicity of the people, presented, at first view, a picture of the world's golden age; except that the Damons and Phillises could read and write, — ay, and were often great readers, for they had not many amusements. But, after all our poetic dreams, experience ever brings us to the great truth that there is no Eden for sinful man; nay, that the happy garden of the first pair would be no joyous abode to those who have tasted of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Better for them the earth, with its thorns and thistles, from which bread can be won only by the sweat of the brow. Work! work! mistaken man, if you would live a true life.

Louisa Baillie had, doubtless, heard these things before; but they came to her with new power from Violet's life.

"Do you really prefer to fatigue yourself with those children?" she asked Violet, one day, when she saw her look a little pale and wearied, after the morning's lessons.

"You have chosen your time well," said Violet, laughing. "I am a little weary to-day. But you say *prefer*; and I ask, prefer it to what?"

"To amusing yourself."

"But do you never grow weary of amusing yourself?"

"O, yes! but, then, I suppose that is because my amusements are so few, that I travel over and over the same circle, till they cease to amuse."

"Perhaps my circle would have been as narrow as yours; and had it been wider, I am sure I should soon have grown weary of it."

Louisa sat silent for a time, with her hands resting on her lap, and a more than usual thoughtfulness in her face. Suddenly, rousing herself, she said to Violet, "Do you know it has been a great mystery to me, your coming here and sitting down to teach two unruly children? I have been so tired of our humdrum life here, where we see nobody but th
we have seen all our lives, and nothing new ever hap
that I would give anything to go to the North, and l

one of those great cities, where people are hurrying to and fro, and something is always happening, and some untried diversion always offering itself; and you choose to come from such a city to us!"

"I had reasons peculiar to myself for wishing to leave New York; and it was a great recommendation to this place that it was so near Papa Ross."

"Then you do not really prefer this tame life? I told mamma so. O, I wish I could get away from it! It is a perfect stagnation!" and discontent lowered upon Louisa's open brow.

Violet looked on her with pity, as well as surprise, for she loved the generous, warm-hearted girl.

"Louisa," she said,—for these young girls had dropped all the ceremony of strangers after the first few days,—"you surprise me. I thought, if there was any place in the world where people could be contented to live forever, it would be this."

Louisa looked out of the window near which she sat, till her eyes grew moist with tears; then, brushing them hastily away, she cried, "My beautiful home! I do love it, Violet. I should always want to come back to it. I dare say, from the midst of gayer and more bustling scenes, I should often think of it, as Goldsmith did of Sweet Auburn:

> 'I still *would hope*, my latest hour to crown,
> Amid its peaceful bowers to lay me down;
> To husband out life's taper at its close,
> And keep the flame from wasting by repose.'

But I want to *live* first. Is this wrong?"

"I suppose, Louisa, the right or the wrong depends on what we mean by '*to live*.'"

"I mean by it, to have all my faculties in action—in full action; to love and rejoice, it may be to hate and to suffer; but, whatever it be, to do it with all my heart; to see not one stereotyped form of humanity forever repeated

before me, but to catch glimpses every day of new types of character, and to search for, perhaps to find, somewhere among them, my ideal."

"Louisa, did you feel this dissatisfaction when you were a school-girl?" asked Violet.

"No," Louisa answered; "I was too busy then to think of such things."

"And suppose you were to be busy now?" said Violet, smiling. Louisa made an impatient movement, and Violet resumed, gently, almost humbly, "Do not think that I cannot sympathize with you. I was once, for months, with people with whom I had no thought in common, at a place where I could see nothing but a barren, sandy beach, and the wide sea, — a place where there was not even a church; and I was very weary, at first."

"At first! — and were you not always weary?"

"No — I found something to do."

There was a little pause in the conversation. Violet seemed to give her whole attention to the piece of needle-work in her hand. Louisa looked at her silently a while; then she said, "Violet, may I ask what you found to do?"

"There were many very ignorant little children around me, — as ignorant as the children of your slaves, or even more so, — and I taught them," Violet answered, very simply.

"Taught them! — well, I suppose I might have enough of ignorant children to teach at the plantation, and mamma would be glad to go there among our people, if I were willing; but, dear me! that would be worse than teaching Hattie and Georgy!"

"But would it be worse than being idle?" questioned Violet, with eyes still fixed upon her work.

"Violet," exclaimed Louisa, with some excitement in her voice and manner, "I wish you would tell me what you really think, instead of hinting and hinting at it! I never give hints, and I don't understand them."

Violet dropped her work in her lap, and, fixing her eyes upon Louisa, said, "I did not mean what I said as hints, Louisa; and, if I hesitated to speak more plainly and fully, it was because I was afraid it might seem presuming, in one as young as I am, to do more than make suggestions on such a subject; but, if you will promise neither to laugh at me nor to think me very conceited, I will tell you some of the thoughts that came into my mind when I was in that lonely place."

"I never felt less disposed to laugh," said Louisa; "and it would be hard to persuade me that you were conceited; so go on, and let me hear your thoughts."

"Well, Louisa, as I sat there so lonely, thinking of all the past, and all the present, and wishing (unthankful girl that I was!) that I could be as happy as this or that person of my acquaintance, it occurred to me that none of these envied people were quite contented with their lot,—that they all wanted some change to complete their happiness. At first, I only remembered this to wonder at it, and to blame them; but, afterwards, there arose a question in my mind whether this desire after something which we have not—this stretching forward, as it were, to reach some higher good—were not a universal condition of our humanity; whether it were not, indeed, the very impulse by which, both as individuals and as a race, we rise higher and higher—nearer towards our Supreme Good."

"I really cannot see, Violet, how being discontented with our position, and longing for something else, can do such great things for us," said Louisa.

"Is it not from this discontent, and this longing, that all our attainments have come? Did they not set us to work?" Violet asked, smilingly.

"Work! work!—you are forever preaching work, Violet!—as if, instead of a curse, it had been intended as a blessing!" said Louisa, with quickness.

"And that is just what I believe it is, Louisa." Violet's

voice sank lower, and she colored with modest diffidence as she added, "We are taught that God is love; and from love can come nothing but what is designed for a blessing; though the evil in us may sometimes make it a curse."

"Do you mean to say that all work is a blessing?" cavilled Louisa.

"No more than I would say that all prayer is. We are told there is a prayer which is an abomination unto God. Sometimes men work to bring evil on others. No happiness can come from such work."

"But I mean ordinary work — such as men do for money," said Louisa.

"I believe all work, except that done for positively evil purposes, to be better than idleness," answered Violet; "and I think that the nobler the object contemplated by the work, the greater the blessing it will bring."

"Very comfortable doctrine for those to whom Heaven has given a noble work to do," said Louisa, in the tone and with the manner of one who did not belong to that favored class.

Violet remained silent a moment; then she rejoined, though with downcast eyes, and a heightened color, "Louisa, I fear you will think that I am preaching, as you said just now; but has not God given us all a noble work to do?"

"If you mean a purely spiritual work, — the work of preparation for eternity, — yes; but I was thinking of more mundane affairs. I might have learned as much as you have told me from one of Dr. O'Flynn's sermons."

"But I did not mean that, Louisa. I should not presume to press that upon you; though, of course, all our work, to be good and noble, must harmonize with that."

"Then I do not believe that we all have a noble work given us. Pray, what noble work was Robinson Crusoe's, on his desert island?"

"I might answer that his was an exceptional case; but I will not; for I think it was noble, under his circumstances

instead of sinking into apathy, to cultivate and beautify the spot of earth assigned to him; and he reaped, as the reward of his exertion, a cheerful, hopeful spirit."

"Well, to come nearer home, what noble work has Louisa Baillie?"

"May I tell her?" asked Violet, looking up with an affectionate smile.

"Certainly! It is the very thing I have been wanting to get at, all this time."

"Then, has she not a home which she might help to make always orderly and pleasant? That would be a little like Robinson Crusoe's house-building and vine-planting."

"It would only want the difficulties which gave to his work all its glory."

"I doubt that. I think, sometimes, the most difficult thing in the world is, to bring ourselves to do common things cheerfully. Mr. Merton said to me once, when he heard me wish that I could do as much for Papa Ross as Elizabeth, in the 'Exiles of Siberia,' had done for her father, 'Don't waste your time in wishing, my child. Only do whatever there is for you to do, faithfully and cheerfully, and you will be as great a heroine as any of them.'"

"And so, a little more house-work is to make me a heroine!" said Louisa, with a laugh that did not sound merrily.

"I did not say that was all your work," said Violet, wishing to finish what she had commenced, and hoping that Louisa might be better pleased by the remainder of the tasks to be assigned her.

"O! there is more for Louisa Baillie to do! — Well, pray, let her hear it."

"I am afraid she thinks me already a little impertinent," answered Violet, looking up at Louisa, with a smile which met no return. "I will not try her good-nature any further."

"Then, I am to suppose," said Louisa, perversely, "that

the only vocation for which I am fitted is to be a household drudge?"

Violet remained silent; there was injustice in the petulance of Louisa, and she felt it sensibly. Perhaps something in her countenance betrayed this; for Louisa suddenly held out her hand, exclaiming, "Forgive me, Violet! I had no right to be dissatisfied with you for telling me what I insisted on hearing from you. I was a little disappointed at the rôle you assigned me; I believe I was vain enough to fancy I had powers for something higher; but, now you have forgiven me, and I have made my confession, we will say nothing more about it."

Violet had clasped Louisa's offered hand, and then had bent over and kissed her. Now she replied, "You must let me say, dear Louisa, that I do not think you esteem your powers more highly than I do, and —"

"Nay! nay! — If you are beginning to feed the child with sweetmeats, because it would not take the medicine, it is time for me to run away!" cried Louisa, rising. But Violet, throwing her arm around her, drew her back to her seat, exclaiming, with a laugh, "Stop a moment! Perhaps the sweetmeats only cover the medicine. Great powers, we are told, involve great responsibilities; and I think, with brothers to influence, young sisters to educate, and ignorant dependants to elevate and bless, you have a work to do with which any powers may be satisfied, as great enough."

Just at this moment, Harriet and Georgy came bounding in, exclaiming, "Cap'in Allen come! Cap'in Allen come!" This was the name of the master of the little sloop trading between Sunbury and Savannah, by which the residents of the former place were accustomed to receive their supplies of groceries, &c. Its arrival was usually expected with impatience, and was always welcomed as giving something of life to the aspect of their bay. Louisa now ap-

proached the window, and looked out. Violet, too, with her hand upon Louisa's shoulder, gazed upon the white sails glistening in the beams of the afternoon sun, as the little vessel, with all her canvas spread to the south-easterly breeze, came dancing over the blue waves.

"It is not Capt. Allen. His vessel has only two masts, and this has three," cried Louisa.

"This is a schooner," said Violet. "His, from your description, must be a sloop."

"I'll send Harrington down to see what they have on board to sell. Now and then, a vessel comes directly from some New England port to us, and brings us apples and potatoes. Perhaps this is one of them, though they do not generally come so early in the autumn."

It proved as Louisa had suspected, and during the two following days a very brisk trade was kept up with the inhabitants of the little town, in the sale of the productions of New England, which were called, for what reason we know not, "Yankee notions." Nor were business hours, on board the ship, limited to daylight. When all was still in the town, dark forms stole silently down to the water's edge, carrying corn, peas, sweet-potatoes, eggs, and poultry, which they bartered for tobacco and New England rum.

Among the worthies who had engaged in this traffic was Mrs. Baillie's Harrington, a lively, active lad of twenty, who became a great favorite with the sailors, from his merry speeches and his musical powers.

"Come, darkey, let's have a song from you, and I'll give you something better than that rum," said the skipper, on the third or fourth evening that Harrington was on board.

"Wha' him, massa, — brandy?" asked Harrington, with brightening eyes.

"Yes, and good brandy, too; so sing away — that song about the handsome ladies."

Harrington began immediately one of the rude songs

sung by the negroes of the South, in rowing, or any other very active employment. In these songs the rhythm keeps time with the motion of the body; the words are very simple, being generally improvised for the particular occasion on which they are used, though there is always a chorus belonging to the tune. On this occasion, Harrington began his solo by singing, in a voice of uncommon sweetness and power, to a simple but not unmelodious tune, the following words:

"Wind 'em, grind 'em, Charlie ho!
Show me de way for wind 'em so;
Han'some ladies to Sunb'ry town,
Show me de way for wind 'em so.
Miss Louisa Baillie hol' up he head,
Wind 'em, grind 'em, Charlie ho!
Put he toe on de groun', but he heel neber tetch,
Show me de way for wind 'em so.
Miss Wilent Wan Duck him 's de belle,
Wind 'em, grind 'em, Charlie ho!
Han'some ladies to Nor'ard town."

"Hold on there!" cried the skipper. "What makes you say there are handsome ladies to Nor'ard town?"

"'Cause Miss Wilent come from dere, an' I don' b'lieve you 'll fin' a more han'somer lady 'an him nowa'."

"Well, come this way, and we 'll try that brandy," said the captain, leading the way from the deck to his cabin.

Harrington followed him silently down the companion-way, and into the little cabin, where a tallow candle was burning on a table, on which stood also a bottle of brandy, and a tin cup. Having poured about a gill of brandy into this cup, the captain handed it to Harrington, who, saying, "You good health, massa," tossed it off without wincing.

"An't that good?" asked the captain.

"He sweeten me all ober, massa," said Harrington, with a low laugh, expressive of delight.

"How would you like to live where you 'd be a rich man, and could drink as much brandy as you please?"

"Who 'll gie 'em to me, massa?" asked Harrington.

"Why, you 'll just get it for yourself, as I do. You 'll be as good a man there as I am, or anybody. Who knows but you might get to be President of the United States?"

"Cracky! Dat him! Den,

'When I be de President o' dese United State,
I drink mint julep an' swing upon de gate.'"

And, in anticipation of this happy consummation, Harrington, excited by his drink, began to dance a jig to his own music; but he stopped suddenly, and, scratching his head, said, in a somewhat sobered tone, "But, massa, how den? Ken I carry Nancy?"

"Nonsense! You would n't carry Nancy, would you? Why, you shall have a rich woman for your wife, that 's as beautiful as Miss Wilent."

"Well, den, you see, massa, Nancy could wait on she."

"O, if you can't go without Nancy, we 'll give it up. I can only take one at a time."

"I 'll go 'long, massa; den I ken sen' for Nancy, e'n't i'?"

"O, yes; you can send, to be sure!"

"Well, I 'll go 'long! How fur 't is, massa? You sure dem neber ketch me?"

"Catch you! Why, they could n't hurt you, if they did. You 'd be as good as them, then."

"Den we go to-night, massa, less dem ketch me to-morrow mornin'."

"No; you must do something for me, first; and then I 'll give you a quart of brandy and five dollars to begin business with when you get to this fine country."

"Yis. An' wha' I for do, massa?"

"You see, I'm going to carry Miss Wilent back with me——"

"Is you? Why, how dat?" cried Harrington, something like suspicion gleaming in his eyes.

"Why, she ran away, you see, from her father at the North, and he's come for her aboard my vessel; and when they have made it up,—which they will do, as soon as he's had a little talk with her,—she'll come aboard, and we'll sail. Now, I want you to tell me where we shall be most likely to meet Miss Wilent alone; because, you see, her father don't want anybody else to hear what he has to say."

"S'pose I was jist ter call um in de piazza, an' tell um somebody want ter speak ter um?—how dat do?" The captain shook his head, and Harrington continued: "O! I know now! Dís da him! I bin see Miss Wilent and Miss Louisa bin da walk out yonder on da bluff. Dem does walk dere most ebery night. I'll jist go tell my n'young missis he ma' want um, an' him 'll go home; den Miss Wilent 'll be by heself."

"What would prevent her going, too? No, that won't do. You say they were on the bluff; how far off, and in what direction? Can you show us the way?"

"E'n't you know de pint, massa, up yere, war de cedars is? Dem 's de place dem walk, most always; but I guess him purty late for um to-night."

The captain considered a moment, then walked once or twice across his cabin, still silently, then looked at his chronometer, and, at last, said, "Come, go ashore with me, and show me the place you mean. That is all I want you to do to-night; but, to-morrow, if you can anyhow get some of Miss Wilent's clothes together before night——"

"Lor, massa! how is I for git Miss Wilent's clo'es?" cried Harrington, in evident alarm at the proposal.

"An't there any washing and ironing going on in your place?"

"O, yis, massa; in course, dere's washin' an' ironin'."

"And can't you make a haul, when nobody's watching? because we would n't like to take the poor young thing away without any clo'es; and, after she makes up with her father, she'll be so anxious to go that she won't want to stop for nothing; besides, if we were to stop to see about clo'es, how could I get you off, or give you your quart of brandy, or your five dollars, or anything? Now, if you'll make a haul on the clo'es,—jist take what you can git, you know,—and bring 'em down here, on the sly, jist as you brought your potatoes this evening, as soon as ever the ladies set out on their walk, to-morrow evening, you need n't do another stroke of work, but jist stay on board here, and we'll take you where you'll live like a lord all the rest of your life. But, mind! if you breathe a word of this to anybody, I'll blow your brains out, and burn you alive afterwards!"

"Need n't 'fraid, massa; need n't fraid! I neber tell; an' I sho' to come."

"Stop," said the captain; and he stepped into the steward's pantry, and, dipping his hand into a barrel of flour, came back and shook it over Harrington, so that he was thoroughly whitened from his head to his feet.

"Oye, massa! Wha' dat?" cried the frightened boy, apprehensive, as his race always are, of witchcaaft.

"It's witched," said the captain; "and now you can't say a word that I shan't know; and if you speak a syllable of this to anybody, I've only got to throw some of that same flour in the fire, and your heart will burn up inside of you!"

"O, massa! please tek de witchin' off! I'll neber tell nobody!"

"Then the witching will do you no harm. So, take your brandy," pouring him out another half-gill, "and shake yourself, and be off with me to this point where you say the ladies walk."

The brandy gave Harrington temporary courage, and,

shaking himself as free as he could from the flour, he followed the captain from the cabin. As they left it, a tall, lank figure, with long gray hair falling around a face coarse in feature and hard in expression, rose up from one of the berths, exclaiming, with a chuckling laugh, "Now, I reckon, we 'm got her. Ef Spriggins had n't bin sich a lubber, he might ha' had her, too!"

In the mean time, the captain and Harrington, having gone on shore, proceeded in a northerly direction along the bank, which in most places sloped gently down to the water's edge, but here and there caved abruptly in, while dwarf oaks, prickly ash, or cedars, hung over the rifts thus made. After passing Mrs. Baillie's, the houses receded from the shore. There were but two houses north of hers, and one of these Harrington declared to be uninhabited. Still the pleasant path wound onwards over green sward and under pleasant shade-trees, with the water rippling softly just below them, till it ended at a projecting knoll, clothed with cedars, which Harrington called "The Pint."

"And do those two young girls come to this lonely place, after night, by themselves?" asked the skipper, with some doubt of his companion's fair dealing.

"Yis, massa, wha' dem 'fraid o'? E'n't'i' dem know eberybody yere? Nobody eber trouble dem."

While Harrington spoke, the captain had been examining all the features of the scene. He now asked, "Why can't I bring my boat up here? The marsh is covered at high tide, and it will be high water at eight to-morrow evening."

"You can bring 'um berry well, massa."

"Well, now we'll go back. You understand what you are to do — to make a bundle of clo'es and bring it down with you to the schooner, as soon as the young ladies set out."

"But s'pose dem go 'fore he is dark, massa?" The captain paused before he replied, "You may come as soon as it is dusk; we can do nothing till then."

It was now the first week in December, yet the weather in that far southern clime was mild and pleasant. There had been little frost, and no ice. The Pride of India trees, indeed, had dropped their leaves, and stood with their bare branches upholding clusters of brown berries, which served as food for countless numbers of birds, driven by the icy breath of winter from more northern climes. The robin-redbreast especially delighted in these berries, and, like some other *gourmands* that claim to be wiser, they often indulged their appetite to the destruction of their lives; for the berry contained a large seed, which the birds, attempting to swallow, were often choked, and fell to the ground dead, or dying.

But, though the Pride of India had lost all the charm of its graceful foliage, other trees were still green, roses bloomed in the garden, and many wild-flowers scented the air through which Louisa and Violet took their evening walk.

This walk always gave Violet great pleasure. There was a charm in the novelty of being able to walk at so late an hour, unprotected. At first she doubted its propriety, and accepted Louisa's invitation with hesitation; but even her Papa Ross had assured her, at his last visit, that there was no danger in walking at any hour she pleased, with Louisa for her companion, in Sunbury, where the inhabitants all knew each other, and no strangers ever came. So assured, she loved, when twilight was stealing on, linked arm in arm with Louisa, to walk briskly to the little knoll of cedars, and, standing there, to watch the daylight fading from the waters, and the first faint stars glass themselves there instead.

On this especial evening everything looked more lovely than usual to her; for that day she had received her first letter from Mr. Devereux. What an epoch in the life of love is that first letter! How it seems to give visible, tangible reality to what we are sometimes tempted to think a

delicious dream, too much akin to heaven to be realized here!

Mr. Devereux wrote immediately on his arrival in New York. He had had a tedious sixteen days' voyage back again. He found, on his arrival, that the steamboat which went daily from New York to Shrewsbury, during the summer, was laid up in dock for the winter season, there being too little travel in that direction to pay the expenses of the trip. He regretted this on account of the delay, as he must take a circuitous land route to Squam. He would comfort himself, however, with the thought that he was lessening the distance between them, as he did not intend returning to New York, his last long voyage having determined him not to trust the sea again when he was in a hurry. There was much else in the letter — interesting retrospection, blissful anticipation, words that seemed like "holy revealings from the innermost shrine" of a nature whose tenderness touched her the more deeply because it was ever manly, the tenderness of a strong as well as of a warm heart. It was these words which made Violet's cheek flush, and her breath come quickly, as she read them; and which now, as her heart beat against the paper that contained them, seemed ever sounding like a strain of sweet, soft music in her ears.

"Do you know, Violet, I am getting very suspicious of that letter you received this afternoon?" said Louisa, as they took their evening walk.

"Suspicious!" was all that Violet could say, with downcast eyes, and conscious, happy smile.

"Yes, suspicious," Louisa repeated, "that it is from a certain gentleman, whose name I have not heard yet, but of whose relation to you *that* offers satisfactory proof," touching, as she spoke, the ring which sparkled like a star on Violet's ungloved finger.

"Is that all on which you rest your suspicions?" asked Violet, drawing over her hand the folds of the gray cloak,

which, by pulling the hood over her head, served her for both bonnet and cloak.

"Not at all. I can substantiate my suspicions about the letter by quite a chain of circumstantial evidence. First, both by the hand-writing and post-mark, I know that letter did not come from Capt. Ross; yet I am equally sure that it did come from a gentleman. Secondly, as Dr. O'Flynn would say, 'you blushed, on receiving that letter, as no young lady should blush at the mere hand-writing of more than one gentleman;' and, thirdly and lastly, you have looked, ever since you read it, as if you had suddenly acquired a pair of wings, which were lifting you up above all sublunary cares."

Violet did not answer. She almost forgot her companion in thinking how much better than a pair of wings were the heart and the arm whose strength was now hers. Louisa, too, walked on in silent musing for some minutes. The subject of that musing might perhaps have been conjectured by her next question, "Where is Edward Ross, Violet?"

"In Virginia. He will be on the island at Christmas;" and again Violet's thoughts went off to the island, and Christmas, and the "goodlie companie" which were to assemble, on that occasion, under the long silent roof of Capt. Ross. They had now reached the little knoll of cedars, where they stopped, as usual.

"How stupid this being in love makes people!" thought Louisa, "fancy-free" herself, as she gazed on the changing expression of Violet's thoughtful face. "I don't believe she would miss me, if I were to steal away from her."

It was no sooner thought than done. With a quiet, stealthy step, looking archly over her shoulder at Violet, whose eyes were directed afar off to the line of quivering light which one of the most brilliant stars threw upon the placid waters, she stole away to a little copse of wood, not more than twenty yards distant, and hid herself, that she might listen for Violet's expression of surprise on first miss-

ing her. Accordingly, she had waited but a few minutes, though it seemed to her much longer, when she heard a quick, startled cry, and then the call, "Louisa! Louisa!" from Violet.

With a smothered laugh, Louisa, fearless herself, listened to the evident fright in the tones, saying to herself, "You deserve a little fright, my lady! I will let you search for me a while."

She waited and listened, but no sound broke the stillness, except the dash of the oars from a passing boat, which she supposed had roused Violet from her revery. She peeped out of her covert, but in the dusky light Violet's gray cloak was scarcely distinguishable from the trunks of the trees around her. Louisa came out from the wood to have a better view; still, she did not see her. She approached the knoll of cedars, freeing her right hand from her cloak, that she might lay it on her friend's shoulder before she suspected her presence. But when she stood once more under the cedars, no one was there, and it was her turn to call, to listen, at last to implore, with awakened fear, that Violet would show herself—would, at least, answer her. Suddenly a new thought occurred to her. "She has gone home, in her fright, and I dare say will report me lost, and frighten mamma out of her wits; as if anything could happen to anybody in Sunbury!"

The last words were intended, if truth must be told, chiefly for her own encouragement; and she continued to repeat them, or others like them, as she hurried homewards. The light in the drawing-room, the accustomed aspect of everything around her home, revived her courage as she drew near it; and it was with a bright smile, and a face glowing with exercise, that she presented herself at the open door of the room in which her mother, her brother, two gentlemen visitors, and her little sisters, were assembled. No fear was there; all looked home-like and pleasant; the wood-fire burning cheerily, and an astral-lamp

throwing its clear light upon a table covered with books and work. "Mamma, has Violet come home?" The question was simple, but there was something in Louisa's tone, something in the eager, troubled gaze around her, which at once communicated her apprehensions to others. Eager inquiry followed, and in a few minutes the gentlemen were hastening back to the cedar knoll, with lanterns, examining every shadow as they went. They had called for Harrington to accompany them, but he was nowhere to be found.

The night passed away in vain search and sad watching; at length, as morning dawned, one gentleman ventured the suggestion: "Can she have approached too near the water, in looking for Miss Louisa, and fallen in? The bluff has caved in a little way from the knoll, washed, too, into a deep gulley by the autumn rains. The water is deep there always, and it was high tide at eight o'clock last evening."

Every heart accepted this solution of the mystery at once. They had felt it, but dared not utter it. Now, with faltering steps, they drew near the spot; they bent over the broken edge of the bank, and searched, with eager yet fearful eyes, for some mark of the tragedy they apprehended — some displaced earth, some broken twig.

"See there!" whispered George Baillie, putting his hand on a gentleman's arm and pressing him back, that he might not obscure the trace to which he pointed. The earth here, as everywhere else around Sunbury, was covered with the short, matted, Bermuda grass, over which so light a foot as Violet's might pass and leave no sign of its pressure; but there was near the gulley a little spot, scarce a square foot, of bare earth; and there, in the very centre, was the distinct mark of a small, slender foot. It was a little thing, but it was enough; and George Baillie — not too old for tears — bent over it in passionate weeping, while his friends turned aside their heads, and brushed more than once the gathering moisture from their own

eyes. At length, one of the gentlemen, laying his hand on George's shoulder, said, "Baillie, we have something still to do; the body may be recovered." George shuddered. "Poor fellow! you are not fit for it. Go home, and break it to your mother and sister; we will do all that can be done here."

George clasped his friend's hand with convulsive energy, and turned his steps homeward; thankful, indeed, to be spared that terrible search, with its revolting details. None had slept in Mrs. Baillie's house that night, except the two children, Hattie and Georgie, who had sobbed themselves to sleep; the one with her head upon the table, the other upon the sofa. Mrs. Baillie's face looked ghastly pale in the early morning light, as she sat with clasped hands and eyes that seemed dazed with woe. Louisa, unable to keep still a moment, had wandered from the drawing-room to the piazza, and back to the drawing-room again, insensible to fatigue; now declaring that there could be no danger,— "What could happen to anybody in Sunbury?"—now, as some terrible imagining overmastered her avowed tranquillity, uttering a wild cry, and dropping her head into her hands, in a paroxysm of passionate weeping. Now, as her brother came wearily in, and threw himself, with a bewildered look, into a chair near the door, she cried, impatiently, "George, have you nothing to say?—Have you seen—" she could not pronounce the name, and changed her question to "What have you seen?"

George raised his heavy eyes to hers, his pale face grew paler, but no word issued from his lips.

"George, this is too much!—Mamma, do make him tell what he has seen!"

"My son, tell your sister what you saw," said the mother's kindly voice, sounding so drearily now.

"It was only her foot-print on the ground," he said, looking not at Louisa, whose eyes he seemed afraid to meet, but at his mother.

It was Louisa who questioned, still impatiently, "Where — where did you see it?"

As if the words had been forced from him against his will, George answered, "Close to the gulley, just below Cedar Point."

"And — and — what then?" cried Louisa, in a quivering voice, and turning deadly pale.

"They are looking there for the body —" He still spake in the same reluctant voice, and carefully avoided looking at Louisa; but, as the word "body" fell from his lips, shrieking "Mamma! I have killed her!" she fell lifeless on the floor. Her brother and Ma'am Phœbe together carried her to her room, and laid her on the bed, while Nancy — Harrington could nowhere be found — was sent for the physician, Dr. Saunderson. For hours Louisa only recovered from one fainting-fit to cry, "I have killed her!" and to fall into another. It was late in the afternoon when, overpowered by opiates, she at last sank into that sleep which is not rest. Poor Mrs. Baillie sat beside her, worn by sorrow and fatigue into the aspect of ten years more of age than she had seemed yesterday to have lived. George was already more than half-way to Capt. Ross, with tidings that would well-nigh break his heart.

The waters near the gulley had been searched and dragged with nets, but nothing had been found to corroborate the suspicions excited by the foot-print; then boats, carrying a large net or seine between them, were brought to that spot at high water, and, drifting slowly out with the tide, swept the river's depths just in the course in which the current would have drifted any body falling into it there; a cannon was taken there and fired over the water, that the concussion of the air might force those still waters to reveal the terrible mystery which they were supposed to cover. Never had so sad a day dawned on the little town. She had come among them like a spirit of light, so young, and fresh, and fair — and to die thus! Every household seemed

to have lost some cherished member. In the general distress no one thought of the strange schooner, or commented on its departure. Ma'am Phœbe came late in the afternoon, stepping lightly through the dim twilight of Louisa's darkened room, to whisper to Mrs. Baillie, "Missis, he berry strange 'bout Harrington."

"What about him?" questioned Mrs. Baillie, in an equally low whisper.

"Why, missis, nobody is see 'um sence yisterday evenin'!"

"Why! did n't he go with George?"

"No, ma'am. Mas George wanted 'um, but we could n't find 'um nowar'; an he neber come home last night, an' he an't been to breakfast, nor to dinner, nara one; an' Miss Cole's Sam say he seen Harrington a goin' down to dat strange vessel what been at de wharf yisterday, jis' 'bout dusk in de ebenin'; and he say Harrington hab a big bundle o' white clo'es wid him. An' Sam say he ax 'um wa' he was a goin' an' wha' he hab dare, an' Harrington say 't an't none o' him business; an' he run down de wharf an' get aboard de ship, an' de sails begin to go right up, an' de vessel sail 'way."

"And why did not Sam speak of this before?"

"He say, ma'am, he t'ought Harrington bin a carryin' some clo'es wha' bin a washin' ashore for de cap'in. An' he t'ought he must ha' come ashore an' he did n't seen him; tell he yearn, dis ebenin,' dat he was missin'!"

"This is very strange," whispered Mrs. Baillie. "Ma'am Phœbe, send Nancy to tell Dr. Saunderson I want to see him; and when he comes, you call me, and you can sit with Louisa while I am down stairs."

Very soon Ma'am Phœbe came to call her mistress, and to communicate at the same time some further information she had just received.

"You see, ma'am, sister Affie say, she been a ironin' 'isterday, an' she jist gone out to light he pipe, an' wher

she come back, dere, sure enough, been Harrington, in de wash-room, a pokin' 'bout de clo'es-basket; an sister Affie say, 'Wha' you da do dere?' An' he say, 'I come to beg you for piece o' soap, an' I jis' was a lookin' at dem pretty t'ings.' An' he say, 'Who dem is for, sister Affie?' An' sister Affie say, 'Dem is Miss Wilent's; an' all dis pile is b'long to her. I always iron hern fus', 'cause dem trimmed up so much.' An', missis, sister Affie say, dere an't a piece o' dem clo'es left; dem must be de bundle wha' Sam see."

"But what could Harrington want with the poor child's clothes?" Mrs. Baillie could not venture to name Violet yet.

"S'pose Miss Wilent gone in de ship, an' take Harrington to wait on she?" suggested Ma'am Phœbe, quite innocently, as if it had not been just determined, in full kitchen conclave, that this was a fact. The suggestion had some influence on Mrs. Baillie. It probably colored her statements to Dr. Saunderson, — statements which evidently seemed to link Harrington's disappearance with the engrossing topic of the day, and both with the departure of the schooner. By Dr. Saunderson's request, Mrs. Baillie sent for several other gentlemen, who obeyed the summons immediately. Then Affie and Sam were called in, and told their stories for themselves. Attention being directed to the schooner, inquiry was made respecting her time of sailing. Sam was the only one who had seen her at the moment that she left the wharf, and he testified that, "She act berry strange; for, 'stead o' goin' dis way right out to sea, she sail dis way roun' de island o' marsh into de back riber; but I t'ought may be 't was de flood tide make 'um do so."

"Was any one out in a boat, last night?" asked one of the gentlemen.

"Bro' Cudgo bin a gittin' oshter, sir, an' he didn't git yere tell dark," answered Sam.

Bro' Cudgo was sent for, and very important information elicited from him. Divested of his repetitions and redundances, it was, that he had seen the vessel — indeed, had been very near her, as he was returning, about dusk, the preceding evening; that she was standing off and on, at the time; and this, and the peculiarity which Sam had noticed, of her going around the island of marsh, attracted his attention to her; that he saw a boat approach her from the land, when she was on one of her shore tacks; that he was quite near at this time, — near enough to see a long, dark bundle lifted to the vessel's deck from the boat; and then two men went up, and they hauled the boat alongside, and the schooner stood right out to sea.

The conclusion from all this was that Violet had been carried off, and apparently against her will. Yet, terrible as such a supposition was, each man drew his breath more freely as he made it, for he might *hope.* It is only death beneath whose dread shadow hope faints, and the human soul lies down in helpless despair. All day the air had seemed thick around them, — dark horrors brooded over their sunlit waters; but now, though daylight was passing away, and darkness was stealing over them, they could look upon them again with gladness — no tragic associations marred the influence of their beauty.

"And my poor Louisa will be comforted now, I hope," said Mrs. Baillie.

Very different was the feeling of Capt. Ross, who arrived the next day.

"Would that she were dead!" escaped from his bloodless, quivering lips, as Mrs. Baillie forced on his reluctant ears the assurance, so comforting to her, that this was a case, not of death, but of abduction.

The next morning's sun rose on him already far on his way to Savannah. There was no hope in his heart, but there was a faint image of it, with which he might [illegible] himself while thus moving. At any rate, it was some

to be doing — doing for *her*. O! what a pang came with memory of her innocent, fair youth! and this cruel suspense would soon be changed for certainty — certainty of what?

So incoherent were his thoughts; but one bright gleam broke upon his night, on his arrival in Savannah. A steamer had arrived, a few days before, in Savannah, from Norfolk. She would sail on her return voyage the next day. This was the first attempt to make steam available between the Southern and Northern ports of the United States. The steamer was to call at Charleston, and to pursue as far as possible an inland passage, being only one night on the open sea. Even so guarded, the attempt was looked upon with grave apprehension. This was a trial trip, intended to inspire confidence, and prepare the way for more gainful voyages in the spring. Men looked upon those who ventured their lives in her as guilty of reckless temerity; but what was life to Capt. Ross, in comparison of speed? In the steamer he would be in Norfolk on the third day; by land it would take him five, probably, to accomplish that distance, and in a sailing-vessel he might be much longer detained. He sailed in the steamer.

CHAPTER XII.

"Alone, alone, all, all alone,
Alone on a wide, wide sea."   ANCIENT MARINER.

"What though the mast be now blown overboard,
The cable broke, the holding anchor lost,
And half our sailors swallowed in the flood?
Yet lives our Pilot still."   SHAKSPEARE.

SHREWD as Dr. Jamieson was, he had been mistaken in one of his judgments. The fortune of the flashy Mr. Spriggins was not, as he had told Katy, "like his chain, brass-gilt." His father, a plodding, pains-taking, close-living man, had made and saved money, leaving this only child, at his death, in the possession of property not much, if at all, below Katy's mark. Wholly uneducated, and accustomed to feel himself rich if allowed to call a few shillings his own, the youth launched at once into every species of expense by which he could dazzle the eyes of his low associates; who, more shrewd than himself, found various ways of getting their hands into his pockets, — one of these being the introducing him to sharpers yet more cunning than themselves.

Dick Van Dyke had been accustomed to sell his ill-gotten merchandise to the elder Mr. Spriggins, who dealt in other things besides ice-creams, so that his acquaintance with the son was of long standing. At one of those convivial meetings at oyster-cellars, or porter-houses, in which Dick, saturnine as he seemed at home, often indulged when he was in the city, Mr. Spriggins' determination to marry "the han'somest gal in the country" had been the subject of

conversation; and that gentleman declaring that he meant to do it, but that it was "such a deuced trouble to find one handsome enough, that he would give a thousand dollars to anybody that would get her for him," Dick offered his services, and the bargain ensued, upon which Mr. Spriggins went to Squan Beach. Without one manly or generous sentiment, the coldness, even the haughtiness, manifested by Violet, only stimulated his low and little mind to a stronger desire for triumph over her. This might have given way, at last, however, to the real difficulties of the case, after her removal from the beach to Dr. Jamieson's, had not the taunts of Dick, and of others instigated by him, rendered the acknowledgment of failure too galling to his vanity.

Under their management every unsuccessful effort was made a new motive for perseverance, until he had vowed that he would have her back in New York, though Capt. Ross should carry her to the antipodes. It was no difficult thing, at that time, whatever it may be now, to find a sloop or schooner owned by the man who sailed her, and who was ready to engage in any enterprise that promised large profits, even though attended with some hazard. The acquaintance of Dick and Mr. Spriggins lay in the line in which such men were most readily met; and even before the return of Dick's confederate on board the Garonne had brought them information of the place to which Violet was going, — information obtained from the unsuspecting Wild, by the very man whose life Mr. Devereux had saved, — the captain of the Edward and Mary, of Salem, was laying in a cargo which he knew would find ready sale in any Southern port, and which, with the fee offered for his services by Mr. Spriggins, would make his trip more profitable than any other that was likely to offer. Some delay occurred in the execution of their plans, from Mr. Spriggins himself, who, finding the first taste of the sea not agreeable, had, to Dick's great wrath, offered a further fee to the captain, when already

some hours out at sea, to return to the neighborhood of Sandy Hook, and allow him to go on shore in one of the pilot-boats generally to be found cruising about in that direction, leaving the accomplishment of their plans respecting Violet to Dick and to the skipper himself.

How successful those plans had been, the reader has seen. Of the mode in which the result was secured, little remains to be explained. The quick eye of the skipper had left no point of the scenery unobserved around that little knoll designated by Harrington as the usual limit to the walks of his young lady and Violet. The little gulley, covered, as we have already said, by a thick mingling of ash, cedar, and dwarf-oak, at once presented itself to him as offering an admirable hiding-place for a small boat, in which Dick and himself, rowing there as soon as the tide had risen sufficiently to render so near an approach to the shore practicable, might await the arrival of Violet. Every arrangement for sailing was made on board the schooner before the boat left her. As soon as Harrington was on board with the clothes, the rope, which was all that attached her to the wharf, was to be slipped, and she was to proceed in the direction in which the boat had gone, lying off and on, till she received her commander again on board. The difficulty of finding Violet alone had determined them to risk the performance of their honorable mission in the presence of Louisa, arguing that the distance at which the theatre of their operations lay from any dwelling would give them time to be off before she could communicate the alarm; and, as there was no vessel larger than an eight-oared row-boat belonging to the place, they felt that, once on board the Edward and Mary, they were safe. Louisa's withdrawal from Violet gave them an unexpected advantage, of which they immediately availed themselves. The captain himself landing, and stealthily advancing to the little grove of cedars, threw a cloak over Violet's head, quickly stifling her frightened call for her companion, and bore her alo

the path he had already pursued, to the boat, suffering her to rest on the ground just at the edge of the gulley, where her foot-print was seen, for one moment only, while Dick opened the branches sufficiently for him to place her in the boat, without releasing her from the pressure of the camlet cloak over her mouth, by which her screams had been stifled. He continued to hold it there till Dick had, with one oar, shoved the boat from the shore, and paddled to a considerable distance. When he removed his hand, she was still enough; for, though not unconscious, she had lost all power of speech or movement, in the exhaustion produced by terror, want of air, and her vain struggles with superior strength.

As her face was uncovered, she gave one glance through the clear, star-lit air to the grim forms before her. As her eyes rested on Dick, she strove to raise her head from the gunwale of the boat on which it lay, to take a better view of him, but it sank back again. He saw the movement, and, unable to restrain his triumph, shouted, "Ho! ho! ho! I 've got yer where there han't no Dr. Jimersen, nor no law, — nara one!"

Low down in her heart rose the response which she had no strength to speak, "God is everywhere."

When they reached the schooner, Dick ordered her roughly to rise; and when he found that she did not obey him, stretched forward as if to enforce his command; but the captain shoved him back, saying, angrily, "Let the young 'oman alone! Don't ye see she 's beat out intirely, an' can't move, nohow? I promised to carry her to Mr. Spriggins, safe. She 's part o' my cargo, now, an' I mean to take care on her tell I git her to hum; after that, ye 're 'sponsible!"

With muttered curses both on him and Violet, Dick gave way. She was carefully lifted on deck, carried to the cabin, and consigned to the care of a woman who performed the offices of cook, chambermaid, and steward, on board. Seated

in a large arm-chair, Violet, as she heard the captain, who had supported her there, leave the cabin, unclosed her languid eyes. They rested upon a woman whose complexion seemed that either of an Indian or mulatto,—which, it was not easy to determine, though her straight black hair was more characteristic of the former. She had taken the tallow-candle from the table, and was examining Violet closely by its light.

"Well, you am a purty cretur!" was her exclamation, as she met the sad gaze of those large brown eyes.

There was something encouraging in the kindness of the tone, and Violet, in a gasping whisper, said, "Help me!"

"So I will help you!" was the quick response; and, setting down the candle, she would have unclasped Violet's cloak, but she drew back, and with a feeble hand folded it more closely around her.

There was a hand placed on the lock of the door, and, with a look of terror, Violet clasped her hands around the woman's arm.

"Don't be frightened!" she said. "Nobody an't a comin' here. An' nobody shan't hurt you, while I 'm aboard. I 'm a comin'!" she cried, to the person who was now impatiently shaking the door. "Le' me go, honey!—they shan't come in."

Violet's hands fell to her side, as the woman broke from their clasp and went to the door, followed by a glance that riveted itself upon her, as if with her went her last hope. The door was opened but a little way, and Violet heard a man's rough voice put the kindly question, "How is she, Luce?"

"She 's a'most dead, I think. But an't she a beauty, an' a rale lady, too? I tell you wot, cap'in, it 's a bad job,—I swa' it is,—an' I should n't wonder ef you all go to Davy Jones's locker—"

"Now, none o' yer gab, Luce!—What 's done 's done,—so now jist give her that, an' try to bring her roun'."

"She's so frightened, poor soul, I don't believe she can swallow! Jist look, now, ef ever you see a poor lamb look so scared. I swa' it 'most makes me cry to see her."

A man's head was thrust within the door, and his eyes fastened themselves for a moment on the white face, all whose life seemed concentrated in its gleaming eyes. Quickly withdrawing again, the voice was heard saying, "Can't be helped now, Luce! — Jis' give it to her, an' tell her nobody shall trouble her while she's aboard the Edward and Mary. I'm master here, anyhow, an' that old shark shall do as I say, I'll be bamboozled ef he shan't!"

Her senses sharpened by fear, Violet heard every word of this conversation; and, rough and strange as it was, there was something like comfort in the expressions of pity, and especially in the last assurances. The mixture sent to her proved to be hot brandy-toddy. Desirous to please her coarse but kind attendant, she tried to take it; and, though she could swallow but one mouthful of it, the stimulant revived her.

Violet's surprise may be imagined when Luce showed her the articles of clothing which had been brought on board for her by Harrington. She listened without a word of reply to the story which told of him, of the ease with which he had been duped, and the extravagant expectations with which he was now sailing to New York.

"I guess he'll wish he was back 'fore Christmas come! Sarve him right!" Luce concluded. "But now, honey, jist you let me ondress you. Nothin' 'ill trouble you — see, you'll sleep there," she opened a little state-room containing two berths, "an' you can lock the door, an' nobody can come in. Well, ef you won't ondress," she said, as Violet again drew her cloak around her, on her attempting to take it off, "jist *lay* down so, an' Luce 'ill *set* here, an' I'll be —— no, then, I won't say bad words,"—in the voice in which she might have soothed a child,—"but nobody shan't come in there, that I swa'."

"Will you stay with me in there? will you lie in that other berth?" asked Violet, who felt any woman's presence a protection.

"Won't I? — ef you 'll let me," answered Luce, evidently pleased at the confidence reposed in her; "but I must jist run up an' tell the cap'in wa' I 'll be;" and, though Violet caught at her dress to detain her, she ran up the companion-way to the deck, leaving the door open behind her. And through that open door came sounds of rude revelry, appalling yet more the poor frightened heart which throbbed so painfully below. What they said, Violet's straining ears could not distinguish. It was a mixed sound of laughter, singing, and screaming. At one moment Violet thought she could distinguish the voice of Luce in angry tones, uttering words of coarse abuse and blasphemy; but she hoped she had been mistaken, when, almost immediately after, she stood beside her, speaking kind words, and assuring her that she would do anything she wished.

"I tell'd the cap'in to get 'em for you," she said, holding up the pile of clothing so lately abstracted from Affie's basket. Hitherto Violet had felt only terror, but the sight of these familiar objects touched another chord. She thought of the pride with which Affie would have come to show her those nicely-plaited frills, and linked with this thought came the memory of all those simple domestic cares and pleasures which enter into the idea of home, and the kind faces of the little group in Sunbury rose before her — their sorrow, and the far more bitter suffering of Capt. Ross; and "O! O! it is too much!" she cried, dropping her head upon the pile of clothes which Luce had placed upon a chair, and weeping with wild abandonment. Her heart was yet beating against the letter which had caused that pleasant dream — a dream so rudely broken!

"Don't ye cry so — don't ye cry!" ejaculated Luce, again and again, while she hovered over her, vainly longing to do something that might soothe the bitterness of her

grief. "May be, when we git to New York, we'll do somethin' to outwit 'em, yet."

Was it this vague promise that soothed poor Violet, that caused her sobs at length to die away, and made her lift her eyes, with a more tranquil light in them, to the face of Luce? Not so. Like a child whom sorrow and fear drives to its father's arms, the last piercing pang had driven her to her heavenly Father; and, in the renewed conviction of his presence, and confidence in his mercy, she found comfort. She would not undress, but she consented to lie down in the upper berth, wrapped in her cloak, if Luce would lie in the lower one.

"An' don't ye be afeard!" said Luce. "I'll lock that door, an' sleep with the key in my han', an' not one o' them devils shall tetch it."

Poor Luce! long an outcast from all the good of her sex, it was the purity and delicacy impressed on Violet's face, and surrounding her, as it seemed to her, with an atmosphere of sanctity, that fascinated her from the very first moment she looked on her; and when this angelic being spoke to her, pariah as she was, in accents of kindness, and even of confidence, the conquest was complete. Darken the human soul as you will, it will still see the beauty of holiness, even though it be as Dives saw Lazarus — with a great gulf between them.

It will readily be believed that sleep was far from Violet's eyes that night. Earnest prayer brought calmness, but she could not long maintain it. Thought of those in whose hands she was would agitate her soul with terror; thought of those who would suffer in her sufferings would melt her to tears; both would drive her back to her only refuge. Exhausted by these alternations, as day dawned she sank into troubled slumber. She awoke with a startled feeling, and looked wildly around her. Luce was standing by her, with a cup of coffee without any cream or milk in it, and a plate of toast which she had endeavored to make as inviting

as possible. Her look of disappointment, when Violet said she could not take them, induced her to make the effort, at least, and she drank the coffee. For the rest, Luce herself saw that she could not swallow anything but liquids. So she said, "Never mind, honey: go to sleep, and I'll bring you some soup by'm by."

And so day succeeded night, and night day, with little change to poor Violet. Luce reported foggy weather. They had not seen the sun since they sailed; but they had fair winds, though light, and "the cap'in guessed," she said, "they was a goin' pretty fair."

Violet heard with little interest. Better for her this little dark cabin, in the midst of the heaving sea which had resumed its melancholy dirge, with one kind, pitying heart near her, than the land, with men whose hearts were as stones. Here, as well as there, she was encircled by the everlasting arms; and in this was all her hope and all her defence. Wrapped in her cloak, she lay, with little intermission, for five days and nights, in that narrow berth; no cheering sun, no starry beam, leading her thoughts to the great Source of light. A dark, sullen sea seemed above and around as well as below them. Every morning the fog grew more dense, till even the rough, bold captain, who had boasted, at first, that he knew every foot of the way, and could sail by his "reckoning" as well as by any observation, began to look anxiously upward as noon approached, and to wish that the sun would, for a brief hour, show its place in the heavens.

On the morning of the fifth day, Violet, for the first time, saw Dick Van Dyke. During the long, sad night-watches, a thought had visited her which had brought some gleam of hope. She remembered what Katy had said of a thousand dollars as the price which Mr. Spriggins had offered for her; and she felt there was one to whom ten, twenty times as much would be as nothing, in comparison with her

rescue.

"Luce," she said, addressing her as she entered with her morning cup of coffee, "is my—is Mr. Van Dyke on board? I think I saw him here the first night I came."

"Yes; Dick Van Dyke 's here, sure enough! an' ye 'd ha' seen plenty on him, ef the cap'in would ha' let him comed; but, arter all, Morgan an't the worst man in the world. He said he 'd carry you to the man as was to pay him for it, but he would n't let nobody 'buse you."

"Well, Luce, I want to see Mr. Van Dyke. He 's my father, and—"

"I don't b'lieve it, an' I tell'd him so! He 's stealed yer fro' some o' them ships what 's comed ashore to Squan. Ye 're a lady born an' bred!"

A faint color flushed Violet's pale cheeks for a moment, and she closed her eyes with a thrill of pleasure at the thought; for, after all, the sharpest pang from which she suffered was the remembrance that she must call the man who wrought her woe "father." The lonely grave on the beach rose before her. She thought of Katy's evident reluctance to speak of the stranger who filled it—of the babe, asserted to have died with the rest; and she almost wished that she had not prevented Mrs. Wild from revealing her imaginations, and the circumstances in which they had arisen, in her desire to guard her parents from dishonoring suspicion, as well as to save Capt. Ross from the renewal of past suffering, by the suggestion of possibilities which could become certainties only by the confession of Dick and Katy themselves. The opening of the door aroused her, and, looking towards it, she saw Luce going out.

"Luce," she said, "I must see him."

"Who?—Dick Van Dyke?"

"Yes—my father, Luce," she forced herself to say.

"Well, I 'll tell the cap'in."

"Cap'in Morgan," as Luce called him, told Dick that Violet wished to see him, adding, "Now, I tell you what, I an't a goin' to trust you with her out o' my hearing. If

she is your daughter, an' that Luce don't b'lieve," — this was said with a peculiar smile, which left it doubtful whether he did not share Luce's incredulity, — "'t an't no use, you see, to abuse her; an', besides, she 's part o' my cargo, an' I promised to deliver her safe to Spriggins."

"Come 'long, then," said Dick, grimly; and they went down the companion-way together, the captain stopping in the outer cabin, and Dick advancing to the little room in which Violet lay.

"Father!" she exclaimed, with feverish haste, as he presented himself, "you told me once, or my mother did, — I forget which, — that Mr. Spriggins would give you a thousand dollars. I know one who would gladly give you five times that sum, if you will consent to my marrying him."

"The bigger fool him! an' I 'd like ter know wot yer call him," said Dick.

"Mr. Devereux, father, who was at the beach when I was there last year, and who helped my mother so much when she was ill."

Even Dick, obtuse as he was in matters of feeling, could not misunderstand the color that rose to her white brow, or the tone in which that name was spoken.

"An' ye 'd like that, I 'm a thinkin'," he said, and, with a sharp, searching glance, waited for her answer. No answer came in words; but her veiled eyes, and the tender smile that flitted across her lips, spoke plainly enough, even to him.

"An' Cap'in Ross 'ud like it, may be, too?"

"He would," Violet answered, thinking to strengthen her position. "He has given his consent to our marriage; and Mr. Devereux is now probably at Squan Beach, where he went to see you and my mother about it."

"Well, I 'll tell Spriggins he must gie me five thousan', an' I guess he will. He don' care so much 'bout yer, but

he 's got pluck, and he don' like the boys ter think he 'd gie up; an', besides, he can mek it out o' yer some way."

This speech was delivered with a cold brutality of tone and look that gave to every word its utmost power to torture.

"Father," said Violet, with more sadness in her voice and less hope in her heart, "Mr. Devereux will double that, — at least, he and Papa Ross will, — double, treble it, — to buy my safety."

"I don' b'lieve it! Them 'ud n't gie half as much for yer as yer think; an', ef them 'ud, them should n't have yer! I 'll mek Cap'in Ross sorry yet for hittin' me, as ef I bin a dog, that time yer was a ridin' ter Hobucken!"

"O, father! I did not know it was you; he could not have known it, either. For my sake, he would not have done you any harm, if he had."

"Well, ef ye ever git a chance, ye can tell him 't was me, an' that I 'd sell yer ter Spriggins ef 't was only 'cause I think he 'd hate it; an' I 'll tell Spriggins — "

"Come, now! no more o' that!" cried Capt. Morgan, showing himself at Dick's side. "Ye see, young 'oman," turning to Violet, "yer promises an't o' no value. May be the gen'lemen mought keep 'em, an' may be them mought bring the p'lice upon us. Now, Spriggins we 're sure on, 'cause he 's as bad off in the business as us; an' one bird in the han' 's worth two in the bush."

They disappeared, and with them Violet's last earthly hope. All she could do now was to be still, and wait for Him from whom her help must come. To be still! What task so difficult as this, to the soul of man!

In the afternoon of this day, the wind, which had been southerly and very light during their voyage, veered to the east, and came in fitful gusts, sometimes sweeping into Violet's face, as she lay, the spray from the waves, which rolled, with a long, heavy swell, shorewards. There seemed to her imagination a wailing sound in the wind; and, as the

starless night shut out everything from her sight, the little vessel seemed to her to be tossing and laboring as it had never done before. She fell asleep with this impression; perhaps, had life looked brighter to her, it would have inspired fear enough to keep her waking. She awoke, a little after midnight, with the feeling that she had been flung into the sea; and scarcely had she aroused herself sufficiently to realize that her fall had been upon the floor of the little cabin, now floating with water from the waves which had swept over the deck and down the companion-way, when a crash on deck, the stamp of heavy feet, and the increased inclination of the vessel to leeward, told that a mast had gone. All was dark around her. She put out her hand to feel for Luce, whom she supposed to be in the lower berth of her state-room. She found the berth, but Luce was not there. And was she to die thus, in darkness and loneliness? Was this little cabin to be her coffin, in which she should sink down, down, to the unfathomable depths, before whose dread mysteries imagination cowers? Like a child whom danger and suffering drive ever home to the parent's arms, her thoughts flew heavenward and brought back somewhat of calmness. Was she not still in His hands?

But this darkness and loneliness! Could she not get to the deck and see all that was before her? Those who were there would be too busy to heed her. She crawled in the direction of the stairs, putting out her hands carefully to feel the obstacles in her way. A gleam of light came down the companion-way. She began to mount, painfully climbing on hands and knees. She had risen almost halfway when the vessel righted, rolling heavily up to windward. The motion threw Violet down to the cabin-floor, and at the same time she found herself drenched by the water which came rushing down from the deck. Panting, breathless, half-drowned, she began again to ascend, and with better success, from the position of the schooner. Her

head had just risen above the deck, when she saw Luce sitting on the first step, her head bent down on her knees, and her apron thrown over it. She laid her hand on her, saying, "Luce, it is so dreadful down stairs in the dark, I could not stay there!"

Even in the dim light by which only the outlines of objects were visible, there seemed something dreary in the movement with which Luce lifted her head and looked at her, then, rising, began to descend, drawing Violet along with her. She resisted with her utmost strength, crying, "O! don't carry me back! Let me have the air and the light!"

Luce paused; then, by movements rather than words, she made her understand that she must sit down on the step where she was. She herself went down, and, after some time, returned with a coarse woollen pea-jacket, which she wrapped around Violet.

"You want it more than I do, Luce," she said, showing her cloak.

Luce paid no heed to her, if she heard her, but seated herself beside her, and again dropped her head on her knees, as at first. Violet could not see the water from her present seat; the black sky, and the thick air, and the rigging of the ship, were the only objects within her range of vision. The wind still came in gusts, during which few voices could have made themselves heard. In one of those lulls, when everything seemed, perhaps from contrast, preternaturally still, Violet, bending down to her companion, said, "Luce, are we in great danger?"

Luce looked up to her for a moment; then, pointing upward, said, "How many masts you see there, honey?"

"I only see two; but — Luce, where is the third?"

"In the sea, honey! Them cut it away — an' the cap'in gone, too!"

"Gone, Luce! — gone where?"

It was a solemn question — more solemn than even Luce felt it. She only pointed to the sea.

"O, Luce!" Violet cried, with a shudder.

"Yes, honey! he wan't much, may be, but Luce had n't nobody else. I was a young gal, an' pretty, too, when he bringed me from Canada. I was half Ingin, ye see,—well!"

There was an indescribable sadness in the tone with which that *well* was uttered. It seemed to say all was over for poor Luce.

"Was he good to you, Luce?" asked Violet, resting her hand on poor Luce's shoulder.

Luce bent her head, and pressed her lips passionately to the little hand, before she replied, "Sometimes he was good, sometimes bad enough; but he was the only one, good or bad, poor Luce had!"

There had been a short lull in the tempest, during which the crippled vessel, with one sail spread to steady her, went plunging and rolling on, now riding on the crest of the wave, now buried in its trough. More than once Violet would have fallen down the companion-way, but she was held by the strong arm of Luce. Suddenly, with a roar that overpowered every other sound, the wind swept over the sea, and bore the vessel down to leeward with a force that threatened to press her into the depths of the ocean. With a silent prayer, Violet closed her eyes and covered them with her clasped hands. She heard the rushing of feet, the dull sounds of the falling axe, and then, as the vessel righted, a shout which, though the men who uttered it were but a few feet from her, sounded as if they were almost a mile away. Luce raised her head and listened anxiously; then, dragging Violet after her, crept cautiously to the deck, and, turning quickly aft, crouched down behind the binnacle, and drew Violet beside her. The next moment heavy feet were rushing down the stairs which they had left. Sheltering Violet as well as she could, to the lee of the binnacle, Luce said, bending her head down to her ear, that the rushing tempest should not bear away her

words, "I must go see what them be a doin'. May be Dick Van Dyke 'ill help me take care on yer, as he 'spects to make money by yer, ef he gets to shore."

Violet heard her, and saw her leave her side, with every feeling, for the moment, engrossed by the wild war of elements around her. The dark heavens, the roaring sea, the howling wind, the blinding spray which it drove like a thick rain over the deck, the poor, laboring ship, its one mast straining and creaking as it went rudderless and helpless at the mercy of the tempest — now mounting even to the flashing crest of some huge wave, now sinking to cavernous depths, with a mountain of water on either side threatening to engulf her — combined to form a scene on which none who have ever looked would desire to look again. As she gazed on it, every hope of deliverance faded from Violet's mind. She thought of her loved ones as already in a world apart from her; of herself as already in the presence of the Father of spirits. At such a moment there is but one stay to the human soul. The infidel may scoff, but the scoff comes from a trembling heart, or from a mind which dares not think, lest it should tremble; the humble believer lays his hand within the veil upon the anchor of his soul, sure and steadfast.

"Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will not fear, for Thou art with me," said Violet, softly.

"Come!" cried Luce, laying her hand on her shoulder. She looked up, and saw Dick Van Dyke standing with Luce beside her. She tried to rise, but, trembling with cold and agitation, she seemed to have lost all power over her limbs. They drew her forward, sheltering themselves by the bulwarks on the windward side, till they came near the forecastle, when Dick, lifting her from the deck by throwing one arm around her waist, and steadying his own footing by grasping the rigging as he went, carried her there.

"Ef we're druv ashore, as we're like enough to be, this

is the safest place," he said to Luce, "an' them fools 'ill never think o' lookin' yere for ye. May be we'll git safe ashore yet, ef it don't get no colder. It's great luck, Luce, havin' sich a warm December."

"Ye may say that!" muttered Luce, as he left them. "We'd ha' bin froze to death a comin' on the coast this time last year, with the fires all out, an' the sea a washin' the decks!"

"Where are all the men, Luce?" asked Violet, as Luce seated herself beside her.

"Wa' sailors allers go when them think there an't nothin' more to do: in the store-room, a drinkin' all the cap'in's brandy."

"Luce! they will be drunk! Who will take care of the vessel? Could not something be done yet, if they would try?"

"I don' know; tha' an't much to do when the rudder's unshipped, an' you can't carry a rag o' sail."

"But, Luce, how dreadful for them to die so!"

"Well, I don' know; they won't feel it, ye see; that's what they do it for. I did n't like it, at first, 'cause I was feared they might trouble you when the drink made 'em mad; but Dick Van Dyke, I've hearn tell, can drink a barrel full an' never show drunk; an' he'll take care on 'em, he says."

"But you, Luce!—you will pray to our Father to help you in this terrible hour?"

"Don't trouble 'bout me, honey! I an't bin used to ax nobody for help, much. Luce bin used to help herself."

"But, Luce, you cannot help yourself, now."

"Well, I guess I won't be harder a dyin' 'an the rest on 'em."

"But, Luce, God is so good, the blessed Saviour loves you so, will you not ask him to forgive your sins, and take you to heaven when—when all is over with us here?"

"Honey! ye see I don' know much 'bout sich thin

I would n't know how to ax him; an', then, I 'm a thinkin' I'd be sort o' 'shamed 'mong all them good people up there."

"Luce, will you let me ask him for you?"

"Let you, an' thank ye, too, honey; but I 'm feared 't an't no use."

"Luce, do you remember the penitent thief?"

"Well, I don' know, 'zactly, as I do; though I won't deny as I 've knowed plenty o' them kind o' folk, in my day."

"But this one, Luce, was crucified with our blessed Saviour; and, wicked as his life had been, he loved the Lord Jesus when he saw Him suffering so meekly; and he believed on Him — believed that He was indeed the Son of God, dying that sinful men might be saved through Him; and he cried, 'Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom!' and our blessed Lord said to him, 'This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.' Now, Luce, will you not cry to Him as that poor man did? Will you not ask Him to remember you?"

"I 'm a thinkin', honey, may be 't would be better for Luce ef he would forgit her."

"None will be forgotten, Luce. All must stand before the judgment-seat of God. We shall probably soon be there, Luce; and we must both be driven out from his presence into hopeless misery, if we have not secured a friend in Him who died to save us. O, Luce, pray with me! Lord Jesus, have mercy on us! Help our ignorance! Help our feebleness! Forgive our sins! Take us to thine own holy arms!"

In ejaculations like these, and in prayers for pardon and pity of her poor father, and for blessing and consolation to those dear ones whose lives would, she well knew, be long darkened by her death, Violet continued long, — Luce, it may be hoped, joining her in heart, though she did not speak. Suddenly there was a jar, a thrill, as if the inani-

mate ship, suddenly gifted with intelligence, foresaw and shuddered at her doom. Another and another wave, lifting her from the bed of sand on which she had grounded, swept her further on, leaving her, as it receded, to fall more heavily and deeply. Luce started on her feet, and sent forth one despairing cry. Violet lay still, her supplications becoming too earnest, too heartfelt, for speech; they were now the outgoings of the soul itself to its Creator, which he only can understand and meet. She was aroused by hearing Luce exclaim, "Lor' o' massy! what 's that? I 'clare, it 's the black man! Come in yere, you fool!" and she dragged in by his collar poor Harrington, dripping wet, his teeth chattering, and his whole frame trembling with cold and terror. As he saw Violet, he fell at her feet, crying, "O, Miss Wilent! I beg you pardon, my missis! Ef de Lord only forgie me dis time, I neber do de like agin!"

"I do not know that you ever did me any harm, Harrington —"

"O, yes, my missis! I bring you to dis place; I show de cap'in wa' for ketch you! Pray for me, my missis, an' ef I git to sho' I be your nigger foreber!"

"I forgive you, and will pray for you, Harrington; but you must pray for yourself, too."

"O, I know dat, missis! an' I bin a prayin' all night to de bressed Jesus. Ef he only hear me dis time, I neber drink brandy 'gin, Miss Wilent!"

"Where are the other men, Harrington?" Violet asked.

"Dem all gone, Miss Wilent! Cabin bruk to pieces; dem all gone!"

"All? O, Luce! my father!" the words were faint and interrupted.

"What you say them all gone for?" cried Luce, quite fiercely, to Harrington. "How you get yere, ef them all gone?"

"'Cause dem bukra bin drunk, an' he would n't gie me no brandy; so I run 'way an' hide up yere, an' I see

cabin bruk to pieces, an' de water wash me óverboard, an' I ketch a piece o' rope, an' he wash me back, an' den you see me."

"But, I tell you, them an't all gone! An' there 's Dick Van Dyke, now, a tryin' to get this way; — pretty hard work, too."

"O, Luce! can we not help him? Let me try! He is my father; — let me try!"

Violet pressed to the door of the forecastle; but Luce pushed her back, and, snatching the rope that had saved Harrington, and which he still clasped, she went out upon the deck, and, holding with both hands to some support near her, shouted loudly. The voice was lost amid the roar of the breakers and the rush of the winds; but Dick had made his way to the windward bulwarks, and, stooping under them, rushing on when the wave retreated, and holding on to some part of the rigging when it was about to return, he was making his way steadily, though slowly, to the forward part of the vessel.

"Is he coming, Luce? Can you see him?" asked Violet.

Luce put her head inside the forecastle, — outside she could not have been heard, — to say, "He 's coming; but I don' know ef he 'll git yere. Now, ye need n't git up; ye can't help him, nohow."

She looked out again. Violet fixed her straining eyes upon her, for it was now broad daylight, and, even through the drizzling rain, objects were distinctly visible.

"He 's safe now," said Luce, coming quietly into the forecastle, and seating herself. "I seen him cross the gap, an' yere he is."

Thoroughly wet, his grizzly hair clinging to his face, which looked older by many years than it had done but an hour before, Dick appeared before them.

"Father!" cried Violet, holding out her hand, "let us

forgive each other, since it is God's will that we should die together!"

Dick suffered her to take his hand, but answered nothing; indeed, his looks left it doubtful if he had heard her. His first words were addressed to Luce.

"Luce, you know wha' we be?" he asked.

"I know we be fast aground, an' the sea a breakin' over we, an' the win' dead on shore. I don' want ter know no more!" answered Luce, with a gesture of impatience.

"Yes; but, Luce, the place? We be jis' north o' Barnegat, an' there 's my house, Luce; 't an't three hunder yards off! I wonder ef Katy sees we!"

"May be she 's too busy a pickin' up the things what 's floatin' ashore," said Luce, sardonically.

Dick looked drearily at her for a moment, as if scarcely understanding her; then, rising, stood at the door, and gazed steadily out towards the shore.

"I think I could do it," he said, coming back, and still addressing Luce, who looked at him without answering. He was silent a moment, then added, "I 've felt the water col'er 'an this in August. Ye see it 's the long southerly win'." Another pause, and Dick rose resolutely. "I 'm goin'; ef I get to sho', I 'll see wot we kin do for yer, Luce. Good-by! Good-by, Wi'let!" He drew near her, and held out his hand. She clasped it; and, for the first time since their danger began, sobs heaved her bosom. "Father," she said, "I will pray for you; and, if you should reach the shore in safety, tell my mother good-by for me; and Papa Ross, and Edward, and Mr. Devereux. Father, I was to have married him, if you had permitted me. Tell them I loved them to the last, and will love them in heaven. And I forgive you, father, and will pray God to forgive you;" and, bending her head, she pressed her lips to his coarse, rough hand, before releasing it. It was free, but still Dick did not move. Bending down to her, and speaking more kindly to her than he had done since s

was a little child, he said, "I be sorry I bringed yer yere, Wi'let. I'd try to carry yer with me, but I know 't an't no use; an', Wi'let — but 't an't no use to tell yer now!"

"Yes, father, tell me! — tell me, as in the presence of God, before whom we must soon appear, — am I your child?"

Why she should have supposed the communication he had withheld to refer to this, she could not tell, but she felt it to be so; and, having risen to her knees, clung to him, with eyes that searched his face as if they would read his tidings there before his tongue could utter them. He turned away from her, but she turned with him: he could not escape her eyes.

"The truth, father, as before God!" she cried, earnestly, passionately, as if she could not, would not, be denied.

"Yer an't none o' my child, nor Katy's. I found yer aboard a wreck; yer mammy was dead; an' Katy 's got yer daddy's pictur. That 's all I know; so let me go."

She loosened her hold, and, with clasped hands, sank back, exclaiming, "Thank God! Go! go! I forgive you! May God forgive you, too!"

He went. Luce followed him to the door of the forecastle, and watched him as he prepared for his dangerous exploit. She saw him select a spar to aid him in swimming, and, having divested himself of every article of clothing that could at all impede his movements in the water, plunge with it into the roaring sea, white with the storm-surf, and swim boldly and strongly shorewards. The thick mist and the combing waves soon hid him from her view; but across those waves, at moments when the wind swept aside the misty veil, she could see clearly the long white beach, with its sandy hills, the strange dwelling of Dick Van Dyke, — half ship, half house, — and even the forms of men collected on the shore. She reëntered the forecastle, to tell what she had seen to Violet; but she found her reclining against the wall, with closed eyes, hands

meekly folded on her bosom, and such an expression of peacefulness on her face as a child who has pleasant dreams wears in its sleep; and, without a word, Luce stepped back to her post of observation. On board the ship there is nothing from which hope of escape may arise; a few hours seem to bound the life-horizon of those three. Let us, like Luce, look shorewards, and see what help may come thence.

CHAPTER XIII.

> "O my soul's joy!
> If after every tempest come such calms,
> May the winds blow till they have wakened Death!
> And let the laboring bark climb hills of seas,
> Olympus high." SHAKESPEARE.

MR. DEVEREUX found that he had not overrated the difficulties of access to Squan Beach in the winter season. He could obtain from no one in New York any definite idea of the route. All he consulted made Shrewsbury their starting-point; and to Shrewsbury he could only get by hiring a boat for that especial purpose, or by several days of land carriage. Even Dr. Jamieson, to whom he applied when he found that the landlord and waiters at the hotel could give him no information, was at fault. To the question, "How shall one get to Squan Beach, Doctor, now that the Shrewsbury boats are not running?" his answer was, "I really cannot tell you, sir, unless you take a ship here, and go out in a south-easterly gale, taking care to be off the Jersey coast at night, and to make your helmsman steer by such lights as he may see there. I fancy that will bring you to Squan, though whether in a condition to do business after you get there, may be considered doubtful."

A less self-reliant man might have concluded the thing impossible. Even Mr. Devereux might have hesitated to undertake it, if impelled by a less powerful motive. As it was, despairing of help from others, he bought a good map

of the State of New Jersey, and studied out a route for himself. Taking boat at New York for South Amboy, at the head of Raritan Bay, he procured a farmer's wagon and horses, driven by a stout country lad; and, travelling through Middlesex County east to Monmouth County, and then pursuing a southerly course, he soon found himself on the sandy plains with which he was already familiar, and, passing through the little village of Manasquam, was again on the beach.

It is rather slow work travelling over unknown roads, where your way must be studied by map and compass, or inquired out at every few miles, especially if your driver be one whose one idea seems to be to spare his horses; and so, between the delays in New York and the delays in travelling, more than a fortnight had been consumed, and it was the ninth of December when Mr. Devereux presented himself to Katy Van Dyke in her lonely abode. Never had the beach looked so desolate to him as on that day. This feeling may have been in some degree attributable to his impatience at finding himself there when he had hoped to be far on his way South again. But, to any one, and in any mood, the scene would have been gloomy and sad enough, with that leaden sky and gray fog, through which you could only see the gleaming of the white surf, as the long waves rolled in and broke upon the shore, with a dull, heavy sound, that, to the accustomed ear, betokened storms. Katy's usually cheerful face was cloudy as the day, though it lightened up for a while at the sight of Mr. Devereux. She soon began to complain of Dick, who, she said, had taken to going off with Mr. Spriggins, and staying, "*tell* he ben't no good to me, no more 'an ef I had n't no man."

Mr. Devereux's question respecting Mr. Spriggins was followed by a description of that gentleman and his courtship, as Katy termed his insolent persecution of Violet, which made Mr. Devereux walk the cabin-floor with impatient strides. He grew quiet and gentle again, as he heard

of Violet's life at the beach; as Katy, with pardonable vanity, called his attention to the improvements in the house, and in her own dress, which had been the result of Violet's taste; as she told of the children whom she had taught, the sick to whom she had ministered, and the daily kindnesses to all which had enshrined her in the memory of these rough, hard, and isolated people, as a heavenly visitant.

"I don' b'lieve there 's a man on the beach wha' would n't do anything for 'the lady,' as them all call her," Katy continued. "As to Ben Ham, he 'd lay down on the groun' an' let her walk on him, an' thank her, too!"

Katy talked, too, of the good man who occasionally came down to the beach to preach to them, and to bring them books, and give some occasional instruction to the children whom Violet had been compelled to leave.

"An' we all likes the preachin' an' readin' fust rate," said Katy; "but I 'spec' the parson 'ill be mistaken, ef he thinks he 's a goin' to put a stop to the wreckin',—yer see, it 's all our livin'."

Katy showed the Bible Violet had given her; and Mr. Devereux, ere he left her that evening, read some of its sacred pages aloud, feeling, as he did so, that he was brought nearer to Violet by the act. Katy's comment on the reading was, "Ye do it purty well, Mr. Duvo, but not so feelin' like as Wi'let. Did n't she look purty when she used to *set* there an' read; an', when she was done readin', put her little white hands so on the Bible, an' bend her head down so, an' say a little prayer, so softly an' humble like, that every word seemed to come right down here!" And Katy touched herself on the side where she supposed her heart to lie.

The business-like, bargain-and-sale mode of treating his suit for Violet's hand, which Katy's character led him to anticipate, made Mr. Devereux desirous to postpone the subject to the latest moment. He had, in his own mind,

determined to make his proposal when they were about to separate for the night; but the reading of the Bible, and the observations on Violet which followed it, disposed him to shrink, with even more than usual repugnance, from any coarseness in association with her, and he postponed his communication till the morrow; Katy assuring him that they were going to have a storm, which would render travelling over the beach the next day disagreeable, if not dangerous. As she lighted him through the upper saloon to the state-room in which he was to sleep, she stopped for a moment by the box which, having served Violet for a centre-table, had never been removed, and, picking up a few dried leaves that lay upon it, said, "Them must ha' dropped fro' Wi'let's flowers. She could n't ha' seen 'em, though, 'less she 'd ha' carried 'em. I don' know where they comed from; but she did set a deal by 'em. I never seed 'em tell she was a going; but then she put 'em up so careful in a box, I axed her where she got 'em, an' she turned as red as a rose, an' said a boy bringed 'em. I wish I knowed who the boy was. I guess, whoever he be, Wi'let liked him better 'an she liked Mr. Spriggins. She did n't blush so for nothing. But come this way, Mr. Duvo. I 've meked yer bed up in Wi'let's room, 'stead o' the one ye used to have, — it 's more nicer an' comfortabler like."

Mr. Devereux followed her, and was ushered into a state-room from which the upper berth had been removed, giving freer space for breathing, if not for movement. Neat muslin draperies, and snowy pillow-cases and coverlet, gave an air of simple elegance to the little apartment. Even Katy read the expression of his face aright, and said, as she handed him the lamp she had brought for him, "Yer like it, Mr. Duvo, — Wi'let did it."

When left alone, Mr. Devereux, feeling little disposed to sleep, wrapped himself in his cloak, and, opening the little window on the sea side of the saloon, looked out for a while upon the scene, which derived its chief light from the fla

ing of the white surf. The wind had risen since dark to a gale; not blowing steadily, however, but now rushing over the waves with a wild howl, sweeping the spray from their foamy crests, and dashing it like a thick rain upon the beach; and now subdued to a soft, hushing sound, that might have seemed, to fancy's ear, old ocean's lullaby. It seemed to him just the night in which the wrecker might ply his cruel trade; and visions of fearful scenes that might have occurred on this very spot mingling with the sweet and cherished thoughts which its association with Violet had awakened, he lit his cigar, and paced slowly the long saloon, "chewing the cud of these sweet and bitter fancies." Suddenly a light flashed forth on the murky night. Startled by the unexpected glare, he approached his window and looked out, but could see from that no cause whatever for the light, neither lamp nor torch being visible. Listening, however, he heard voices, seemingly above him, subdued in tone, so that the words they uttered were not distinguishable. Placing his lamp at the head of the stairs, in a position in which, while giving light to him, it would be screened from any person who might be out on the beach, Mr. Devereux lightly but rapidly descended. He found the outer door not only unbarred, but slightly open, and stepped out. Advancing to the outermost edge of the huge shadow thrown by the strange dwelling, and looking cautiously up, he saw a large lantern with a brilliant tin reflector suspended to the cross-trees above the roof, and, through a trap-door in the latter, a single man just descending. Immediately after, he heard voices and steps approaching; and, withdrawing into denser shadow, heard a man's voice, saying, "'T an't no use a stan'in' here to watch, I tell yer! This evenin', at sunset, there was n't no sort of a craft in sight. Ef any 's a comin' now, they 'll come fast enough with this wind, an' they 'll stay fast enough, too. No fear they 'll git off before we 're up in the mornin'."

"Well, I s'pose we may as well go home. There won't

be much to do to-night, anyhow. But I guess you could n't tell much 'bout where ships was this evenin', — 't was too thick," rejoined another. "We wanted Ben Ham's eyes."

"D—n him!" cried a third. "I'll tell yer wot, sence Ben won't help, he had n't ought to get nothin'. We have all the resk, yer see; an', then, Ben picks up jist as much as we do."

Mr. Devereux had heard enough to satisfy him of the nature of the transaction in which they had been engaged. The next thought was of his own responsibilities in the case. Could he see this wholesale murder perpetrated without some effort to prevent it? — and what should that effort be? He might as well attempt to hush the raging storm by words as hope, by the strongest reasoning, or by the most pathetic appeals, to influence these monsters. And what could his single arm do against three, — perhaps against double that number, ready to come to their aid? And who would aid him? He remembered what had been said of Ben Ham, and thought he might at least find counsel from him; so, keeping those dusky forms in sight, he walked on through the dense fog and the drizzling rain. They were soon beyond the circle of light thrown by that treacherous lantern, which yet beamed through the murky air like some bright star. Two of the men stopped short of Ben Ham's house; the third passed it. Mr. Devereux waited till he had gone so far that he was not likely to hear him, and then knocked at the door of the house which he thought to be occupied by Ben. It was long before he could make himself heard. At length a light glimmered through the chinks of the window-shutter, a step approached the door, and a rough voice demanded who was there. Mr. Devereux could not immediately recall himself to Ben's recollection, or satisfy him of his identity; but, as soon as he had done this, he was admitted, with many apologies for the detention.

"Yer see, sir," said Ben, "there's some on 'em here

would like to do me a mischief, an' so I don't like to let anybody in arter night that's unbeknownst to me."

"And why is it that they have quarrelled with you here, Mr. Ham?" asked Mr. Devereux.

"Why, yer see, sir, sence my little Bessie died, an' I've yearn what the good lady larnt her, an' what the parson had to say, I han't had no heart to do some things I used to do an' not think 'em no harm; an' that makes 'em mad at me, 'cause they wantst me to help 'em."

"What things do you mean? May I ask if one of them is the hanging out false lights, to mislead ships coming on the coast?"

"That's jist it, sir; for, yer see, I don't think it's no harm — not the least bit in natur'— to take what the sea gives me, fair. Ef the ship comes ashore, an' breaks up, an' the things washes up on the beach, I think they b'longs to me, or anybody as picks 'em up; but, to hang out false lights is another thing, — an' I don't like it, sir, I don't!"

"And do you not think it your duty to do all in your power to prevent it, Mr. Ham?"

"Ef I do, sir, 't an't much one man can do agin five, — six 'tis, when Dick Van Dyke's to hum."

"Well, Mr. Ham, it was on this very subject I came now to consult you. These men have hung a lantern on the cross-trees over Dick Van Dyke's house —"

"The old place," said Ben.

"And I cannot, as a Christian man, suffer it to remain. Cannot we get force enough in the neighborhood, do you think, to support us in taking it down?"

"Why, sir, afore anybody could come from Manasquam, — and that's the nearest place to git help, an' not much on it there, I'm afeared, — we'd be in the bottom o' the sea."

"We'll try that, Mr. Ham. I am going to take that light down. Will you stand by me?"

"That I will, sir, sure; an' I 've got a boy here, a good, smart lad, that 'ill go 'long an' do something, too."

Mr. Ham stepped to the other side of the room in which they were standing, and, shaking what in the dim light had seemed to Mr. Devereux a great bundle lying on a settle, called "Mike! Mike!" and, a blanket being thrown off, with the utterance of a portentous yawn, there rose up and stood before Mr. Devereux, with the light carried by Ben Ham flashing full upon his face, our old acquaintance, Mike. He commenced a sharp remonstrance on this disturbance of his slumbers; but Mr. Devereux exclaiming, "Why, Mike! what brought you here?" his whole tone changed in an instant.

"Mr. Duvroo! Well—I never see the like!" and he stood looking very much like one who, having seen a trick of legerdemain, waits and watches for the next exhibition of the adept's power.

"You have not answered my question," said Mr. Devereux. "What brought you here?"

"Artér I writ the letter—you got it, sir?"—Mr. Devereux nodded, and Mike resumed, with the exclamation, "Now, an't that wonderful! Well, yer see, arter that, I comed here to bring them flowers, as I promised yer—an' I done a little fishin' for meself between times, an' Mr. Hám said I mought stay here, when he found I was a frind o' the lady's an' yourn; an' he let me go wi' him in the sloop to York, an' so I bringed two bookies; an' then the lady was gone, an' nobody knowed where, an' so I stayed."

"I hope you have not been concerned with any of these men in hanging out that light, to-night?"—pointing in the direction in which it hung.

"I han't done nothin' but sleep ter-night," said Mike, yawning again.

"I am going to take it down. Will you go and help me? It may be dangerous work, Mr. Ham tells me."

"Yer fit for me oncet, an' I 'll fit for ye."

"Come on, then!"

Already Mr. Devereux was chafing at the delay to which, had the question concerned only his own safety, he would not have submitted, but which he had felt necessary in order to make his action effective. Now, Ben Ham declaring himself ready, and his wife standing prepared to bolt and bar after them, he went out, followed by his aids, and hurrying on at a rate of speed which soon brought them to Katy Van Dyke's. Ben Ham had suggested that they should preserve silence, and keep at as great a distance as possible from any house. The men, satisfied that their work was done, were probably now asleep, he said; and, if they were not awakened, they might sleep on, leaving them to fulfil their humane intentions without disturbance. Katy's door was open, as Mr. Devereux had left it; and, ascending very cautiously, they reached the roof, and, passing through the trap-door, stood just below the cross-trees. Mike, as the lightest and most active of the party, was sent up to put the light out, while Mr. Devereux and Ben Ham watched his progress from below, prepared to prevent by force, if necessary, any interference with their designs. But their only opponent was the wind, which rendered their elevated position by no means agreeable, and, as it seemed to Mr. Devereux, made the climbing up to the lamp a very hazardous affair. Under this impression, he would have undertaken that part of the business himself, had not Ben Ham assured him that there was no danger to one accustomed as Mike now was to the ascent; while for him, ascending for the first time, in darkness, — for there was, of course, a circle of shadow immediately beneath the lantern, — it would be perilous indeed. Mike, who was of a nature far too investigating to have left anything in relation to the management of this light undiscovered by him, accomplished his task safely and quickly, and slid down again to the platform beside Mr. Devereux.

"And now," said Mr. Devereux, "I think you had bet-

ter stay here the rest of the night. We can make up the fire in the outer cabin, I dare say, without disturbing Mrs. Van Dyke; and I saw some mattresses in the upper cabin that we may bring down and spread on the floor. But I do not know what we shall do for covering," he added.

"We won't want none, ef we ha' fire," said Ben Ham, "an' you better go to your own bed, Mr. Duvo. We'll call yer, ef we wantst yer."

The arrangements were all made without awaking Katy, who was accustomed to sleep through noises. Mr. Devereux went to his little bed, up stairs, with a pleasant feeling that he had this night done the work appointed to him by Heaven. With loving thoughts of her who was now associated with every noble endeavor of his life, with pleasant dreams of a blissful future spent with her, — dreams with which the storm-sounds mingled strangely, seeming to give intensity to his enjoyment of their perfect peacefulness, — he fell asleep. When he awoke, the dull gray light of the morning was shining in at his little window, and, even with consciousness half restored, the noise of loud voices below him, mingling with the raging of the storm, made him start up and look out. O, for the pencil of a Salvator, to present the scene on which he gazed! The mad waters, white with the foam of the breakers, rushed, hissing and roaring, far up the beach, looking, at times, as if they would dash themselves into the very window at which he stood, while the wild winds flung their spray far, far beyond. On the beach were men and women, shrieking, screaming, fighting, plunging into the roaring waves, to snatch a trunk, a bale of goods, a keg, as it floated up amidst broken spars and timbers; and, O, horror! were those dead bodies? Dimly seen at one moment, completely shut out by the driving rain and spray at the next, seeming so near the shore that Mr. Devereux believed he could swim to it, lay the ship, or rather the remains of it, careening to the shore till the water nearly reached the top of its leeward bulwarks, and its one

mast scarcely maintained an angle of forty-five degrees with the horizon. The stern, and even so far forward as the mainmast, was either already gone, or lay so deep that the sea broke over it continuously. An instant had been enough to give Mr. Devereux the main features of this scene, and, hastily flinging on his clothes, he sprang down the steps, and emerged among the excited actors on the beach. He found Ben Ham and Mike among the most eager of them, though obliged to fight, not with the elements only, but often with the angry men around them, for their possessions. Listening to the outcries against them, he soon discovered that no suspicion was entertained of their agency in extinguishing the light, last night. He afterwards learned that it was the custom for the one first on the ground in the morning to do this; and that he who had found it done this morning supposed, naturally enough, that another had been before him, and in the following excitement no inquiry had been made. For Mr. Devereux himself, there was but one thought, one excitement, in this scene. Were there lives on board that ship which might yet be saved? He shouted the question into the ears of more than one, but could obtain no answer; none seemed to have thought of it. He rushed into the house for a glass which always hung in Dick Van Dyke's cabin, and, finding a rest for it, he kept his eye steadily directed to the wreck for several minutes. Suddenly throwing the glass aside, he sprang down to the shore, and, seizing Ben Ham, shouted, "There are living creatures on that wreck — a man and a woman! Let us try to save them! A hundred dollars for you, if we bring them safe to land."

A hundred dollars! It seemed a fortune to the wrecker. He looked around him carefully, measured the distance to the wreck with his eye, noted the direction of the wind and the height of the tide; then, shaking his head, sent back the cry, "Ef I 'd more 'an one life, I'd try."

"And shall we stand here, like cowards, and see a woman

die before us?" cried Mr. Devereux, excited as he had never been in his whole life before. "I will not do it, at any rate! Have you a mortar here? Perhaps we may send a rope on board!"

There was none.

"Where is the nearest life-boat? I will go in her alone, if no one of you is man enough to aid me!"

On that whole coast, from Sandy Hook to Cape May, there was not a life-boat.

"A rope! Bring me a rope! I will swim out with it!" he cried, in desperation.

There was no rope to be found fitted for such a purpose.

"Is there nothing by which life can be saved? There! there! do you see that woman? Must she die before us?"

Look, gesture, the sharp agony in his voice, more than his words, awoke some responsive feeling in two or three of the women among his auditors.

"There 's the yawl in the lagoon," cried one; "I guess she could n't upset easy."

"She would n't upset, but she 'd go to pieces in five minutes in sich a sea," rejoined Ben Ham. Mr. Devereux did not hear, or would not heed.

"Fifty — a hundred dollars for every man that will help me launch that boat, and row her to the wreck!" he shouted.

"Ef the boat was yere, an' 't was ebb tide, we might try," said Ben Ham; "but it 's up in the lagoon, an' we 'd be tell next week rowing to the inlet, and up yere."

"Why not drag it across the beach?"

"A heavy, six-oared yawl 'cross this san' half a mile?"

A cart was at this moment driven up from Manasquam, whose inhabitants had seen the wreck, and were coming to put their sickles into the horrid harvest. Mr. Devereux seized the driver, made a bargain with him for his horse, found his own driver and secured his team, and in less than an hour the yawl was lying on the shore. But it was still

flood tide. The tide, however, was just on the turn. In two hours, even in an hour, it would be strong ebb. The wind would probably lull then, and there would be a chance, at least, of success in their efforts. Now there was none. Mr. Devereux was obliged to yield, though he questioned, sadly, "Will the wreck last till then?" He would willingly, with his present excited feelings, have accepted the greater risk for himself of earlier action; but what could he do with such a boat, without aid? The interval was passed in doing everything possible, at such a time, to strengthen the boat against the action of the waves. The time seemed ages to Mr. Devereux. Again and again he consulted his watch, again and again pointed the glass to the wreck, and searched for those who were waiting there face to face with death.

The tide had been running out for about an hour and a half, when he sprang from the glass to the group at work upon the boat, crying, "There is not a moment to be lost! The man has jumped overboard, and is swimming to the shore! He would not have done this, had not the wreck been parting! We must be off now, or never! I am a good coxswain myself. I have held the helm in a sea as rough as this, and come safe to land! Who are the best oarsmen among you?"

He spoke to Ben Ham, who pointed out five, besides himself, as entitled to this honor. Mr. Devereux called them around him. "Now, men!" he cried, "you ought to be brave, for you are Americans! I am an Englishman, and I am going to that wreck! Will you let it be said that an Englishman is braver than Americans? A hundred dollars to every man of you that will follow me!" He sprang into the boat, shouting, "Hurra for America! Hurra for a hundred dollars!"

He had suited his speech to his auditory, and every man he had selected sprang in after him and seized an oar. "Something to bale with!" cried Ben Ham, putting his

hands up to his mouth for a trumpet, and Katy threw them a tin pail.

The tide was in their favor, the wind against them. This opposition, though the wind had fallen considerably, created a fearful sea. The broad, flat-bottomed yawl it would be scarcely possible to upset, but it would require the quick eye and hand of a master steersman to prevent her being filled by the pursuing waves, and, rowing heavily under any circumstances, with the wind against them their progress must be slow. Mr. Devereux's brow grew stern, his lips compressed, his eye fixed, as their boat hung on the crest of a mountain wave for one brief moment, then toppled down to mount the precipitous side of another. In the second in which it reached the depth between, lay their great danger. They soon encountered another peril. They were among the drifting spars and broken timbers of the wreck. A collision with a heavy timber would be a fearful trial to their boat. He must change his course; he could not steer directly across the waves, as he had hitherto done, to prevent her encountering their full power on her broadside. With a resolute spirit and a firm hand, though with an eye that saw all the danger, the change was made — they were out of the line of the wreck.

"Look there! It's Dick Van Dyke!" shouted one of the men.

On the very crest of a wave, about twice an oar's length from their course, rose the head of a man, — the face turned directly to them, and the wild, staring eyes seeming to entreat their aid. Mr. Devereux could not resist their appeal, though he saw the danger; the boat veered, and at the same moment a huge wave broke over her, and nearly filled her with water. There was a simultaneous shriek from the men; but above the hoarse shriek and the hoarser roar of the waves rose the shout of the master spirit — "Ham, bale the boat! Use your oars, men — all's safe!"

The prow was again turned to the wave, and Dick Van Dyke could be seen no more. He must be left to his fate.

"Must be the Edward an' Mary. Spriggins telled me he was gone in her to bring his darter back," said one of the men.

"What darter — the lady?" asked Ben Ham, who sat nearest to Mr. Devereux.

"Yes; he an't got no other darter, as I knows on."

"O, Mr. Duvo! —" Ben turned to him, but he proceeded no further. There was something in that face, in those eyes, which told that he had heard and comprehended, and which at the same time rendered any words on the subject from another well-nigh impossible. His eyes were fastened upon that swaying wreck, yet, as if by a species of intuition, he guided the boat unerringly along the only safe course. Thousands of drowning men might pass him now — he would not swerve a hair's breadth from the line he had marked out. Once only he removed his eyes from the wreck, to glance at the rowers. They know it is to hurry them, — they see it in his face, though he speaks no word, — and they bend to their oars. Thus they reach the lee of the wreck. There is no time to lose, for the mast is rising and sinking with every wave. Mr. Devereux springs from the boat, resting one hand upon the low leaning bulwark, and he is on board. The very impulse sends the boat off, and a wave dashes over her; but she is brought up again, and Ben Ham bales her out carefully, while another man catches a rope suspended over the side, and reeves it through the block in the boat's stern.

In the mean time Mr. Devereux has entered the forecastle. He sees no one else; his eye darts at once to that corner where she lies, as we have already described her; her white hands folded over the dark gray cloak, whose hood is drawn closely around her white face; her eyes are closed. Peaceful as an angel's is the expression of that face. He bends over her, and says, "Violet!" — there

are volumes of tenderness in that one word so pronounced. Her eyes unclose — a smile, soft and happy as an infant's when, it awakes in its mother's arms, parts her pale lips. "I dreamed you were come," she whispers, as he lifts her in his arms, and her head falls upon his shoulder. He bears her out upon the deck, and, without relinquishing her, descends to the boat, steadying his steps by grasping the rope with his other hand. As he resumes his seat in the stern, he places her beside him, still clasping her with one arm, while he prepares to guide the boat with the other; come what will, they will bear it together. He glances for a moment at her as she rests, exhausted almost to unconsciousness, upon him. The smile is still upon her lips, her eyes remain closed; she asks not whither he is bearing her; she does not even look to see where she is; she is with him — with him — that is enough for her. She remembers others, however. "Is Luce here?" she whispers; "and Harrington?" He looks around; he sees a negro man and a woman seated down in the bottom of the boat, and he answers, "Yes, they are here."

They are upon their homeward way — against the tide now. Every face wears an intensely earnest expression; they know that every stroke now is for life. Her face is close beside him, — her breath fans his cheek, — yet he never withdraws his eye for a moment from his course; but he holds her fast — his now, for life or for death. Wave after wave rushes over the prow. Harrington bales constantly; they scarcely seem to move, so slow is their progress. At length the haven is almost won; but the boat strikes the sharp point of a piece of timber, a relic of some former wreck imbedded in the sands; there is a sudden crash, followed by a rush of water into the boat; even here, just touching shore, the waves may engulf them, and sweep them back. But, no! she has been recognized, and, with a thrilling cry of "The lady! the lady!" the men — eight or ten in number, for many have come from

Manasquam — join hands, and, rushing down into the foaming surf, seize the boat, and drag it with its load on shore. All sternness has vanished from Mr. Devereux's face now. Still clasping his sweet burden to his breast, he rises and bears her towards the house; but his eyes are blinded by tears, and, unable to speak, he grasps in silence the rough hands extended to him as he passes. It is his only answer to their hurras and blessings. Every eye is fixed upon the pale face resting on his shoulder; and the women sob aloud their thanks that she is safe, while men's voices, husky with emotion, are heard uttering a fervent "God bless her!"

CHAPTER XIV.

> "And I smiled to think God's greatness
> Flowed around our incompleteness, —
> Round our restlessness, His rest." — E. B. BROWNING.

THE winds and the sea continued still their wild strife; but human passion seemed for a time awed into stillness by the great deliverance just effected. Those rude men and women, whom "the storm and the earthquake" could not quell, bowed before the still small voice of God's mercy. A fire had been kindled in Katy's house, in what was formerly the ship's caboose, where she was accustomed to cook and wash in summer, in order to keep her cabin cool. Around this fire Luce and Harrington and the wet boatmen gathered; but they talked little, and what they said was in whispers; while sympathetic faces were often turned to the closed door of the cabin, into which Mr. Devereux had borne Violet. There she lay, where he had placed her, on Katy's couch, as pale and still as she had lain in the forecastle of the wrecked schooner, too much exhausted for the manifestation of passionate emotion, but with an ineffable peace in her heart, irradiating every feature with its soft and tender light. She held one of Mr. Devereux's hands clasped in both hers to her heart. He knelt beside the couch and looked at her in silence, pressing his lips gently, now and then, to her white forehead, till, overpowered by thoughts of the past suffering, so plainly marked in her aspect, and of the imminent danger from which he had snatched her, — by joy at her deliverance, and gratitude to

the mercy which had given her back to him from the very portal of the grave, he dropped his head upon the couch beside her, and his whole frame shook with those deep-heaved sobs which are man's strongest and rarest expression of feeling. She raised his hand to her lips, and murmured, feebly, "Don't! don't!"

That feeble voice aroused him as nothing else could have done. He felt that his treasure was not yet safe; and, with a powerful effort, overmastering his emotion, he rose, and, once more kissing her very gently, said, "My darling, you must have dry clothes and something warm to drink." She clung to his hand as he would have withdrawn it, and he added, "I will come back to you, my Violet; and I will keep guard over your door myself, and no one shall pass it without my permission."

He opened the cabin-door, and found Luce standing there, with a number of white garments thrown over her arm.

"These be hern. I brung 'em with me. Them war n't wet much, 'cause I held 'em onder the pea-jacket; an' I 've been a dryin' on 'em to the fire yonder."

It was true. Poor Luce, when she went last to the cabin to secure Dick Van Dyke's assistance, with her heart full of care for Violet's comfort, had seized the bundle of clothes purloined by Harrington, and had brought it on deck, and even to shore, with her. Softer hands there might have been, but none kinder than those which now ministered to Violet. A cup of warm Indian-meal gruel, of which Luce had already felt the benefit herself, helped to restore warmth to her limbs and a faint color to her cheeks; and, when Mr. Devereux reëntered, he found her dressed in spotless white, transparent lace-edged frills clustering about her alabaster throat, and the sweet eyes, which she had seemed too feeble to open, welcoming him with tender, timid joy.

With her hand clasped in his, she fell asleep, and slept for several hours. When she awoke, it was with a start

and a look of terror; but this passed instantly away, as her opening eyes rested on his face.

"What is the matter, my Violet?" he asked, bending over her with anxious love.

"Nothing, now. I was afraid it was all a dream," she answered. The light tinge in her cheek grew deeper as she added, "I was asleep. Have I slept long?"

"For more than four hours," he said, with a smile, looking at his watch. He saw the bright blood flush the pale brow and the delicate fingers, and added, "Your friend Luce was my fellow-watcher. She only went out, as you awoke, to get something she has been preparing for you, and here she comes," he concluded, as Luce entered through the half-open door with a bowl of soup, which she declared would make Violet quite herself again.

"Have you had some, Luce, and poor Harrington?" she asked, as she received it.

"O, yes! Him an' me do well enough; but you war n't made for sich roughin'. But see yere, honey!" — and she held up before Violet the cloak and dark silk dress in which her eventful voyage had been made, dried and pressed with a warm iron, and, notwithstanding some stains in the dress, made quite wearable, — "an't them nice?"

"They look far better than I ever thought they would, Luce," said Violet; yet she shuddered and turned pale as she looked, they were associated with such horrors.

"Take them away!" cried Mr. Devereux, hastily. "She cannot bear the sight of them."

Violet, who had sunk back upon her pillows, saw the shadow of disappointment on the face of Luce, and said, gently, "O, yes, I can! It was only a little faintness. Put them where I can see them, Luce; and, while I look at them, I will forget my sorrow, and think only of the great joy that came afterwards."

Luce hung them over the foot of the couch, and she lay

for a little while with her eyes fixed on them; then, turning to Mr. Devereux, asked, softly, "Did *he* get ashore?"

Mr. Devereux conjectured that she meant Dick Van Dyke, and answered, without hesitation, "Yes."

"Where is he?"

"Outside there," indicating, by the motion of his head, the deck beyond the cabin.

"And she? — I have not seen her."

"She is there, too. She was too much distressed to see you. I feared she would agitate you." He seemed, for the first time, a little embarrassed; and Violet, thinking that this was because he had prevented Katy's coming in, answered, "You were quite right. To-morrow, perhaps, or after Papa Ross comes, — for come he will, — I am as sure of it as if he were here."

They were silent again. Luce had left the room, and Mr. Devereux hoped that Violet was again falling asleep, when, turning to him, with the cry, "O, I am too happy! — happier than even you know of!" she clasped her hands over her face, and burst into tears. He suffered her to weep for a while without restraint, only soothing her with words of tenderest love; but, finding that the weeping grew more passionate, he possessed himself of one of her hands, and said, "Come, Violet, this agitation will make you ill. You must compose yourself."

The voice of authority aroused her. The firm yet gentle clasp, from which, strive as she would, she could not free herself, gave her strength. Gradually the chest ceased to heave, the tears to flow, and, as he drew the other hand from her face, her eyes met his with a faint smile.

"And now," he said, "tell me of this great happiness, of which I know nothing. I am jealous of it."

"O, Mr. Devereux! he is not my father. He told me so when he was leaving me there, as he thought, to die; and he told me she — his wife," — Violet could not, just then, say "my mother," yet long custom had made it hard to

give Katy any other denomination, — "had the picture of my father, — my own father!"

Her hope that this own father might be one whom she had already learned to love as such was not spoken. She almost refused to indulge her thoughts with it, lest disappointment, should it come, should prove too bitter.

"Violet, are you sure of this? — sure that it is no dream?" cried Mr. Devereux.

"Quite sure. He did not like to tell me, even then; but the thought that he had brought me there to die had softened him a little, I think; and I would not let him go until he told me."

"And he said, — let me hear it again!"

Violet repeated what Dick had told her.

"Heaven be thanked!" ejaculated Mr. Devereux.

There was an earnestness in his manner which showed that the ejaculation was the expression of no light feeling.

"It would have been a very painful connection to you," said Violet, while her lip trembled and her cheek flushed.

"You should never have known how painful, my Violet, had you not made this discovery." He pressed the hands he held to his lips, as he added, "Yet this pain was as nothing to the joy of calling you mine!" Her brightening eye told that the assurance had been needed.

The sun looked out brightly before his setting. The storm had done its appointed work, and passed away. Of ship, captain, and crew, there remained visible to human eyes but a few timbers fast imbedded in the sands. Another and a more terrible ruin lay under Katy's roof, as far as possible from the little cabin in which Violet rested. Dick Van Dyke had come on shore, as Mr. Devereux had said, and he was in the place he had intimated; but he had come a bruised and mangled corpse, and he lay there stiff and stark and cold, the coarse, grisly hair falling over a deep gash in his forehead, and the glassy eyes, that would not be closed, looking out with a ghastly stare. His old comrades shrank

from him, — those of them who had lit the lamp last night, and who knew not how soon it had been extinguished, — feeling, perhaps, in their inmost hearts, that they had been his murderers. But he was not forsaken. Katy was beside him. The sight of Violet had first aroused her apprehensions for Dick. From that moment she had watched every approaching wave with dread. Others might grasp the booty, or minister to the rescued; she had her work, — to watch for Dick. He came as he had never come before. She saw him as the wave bore him on, his limbs swaying to and fro in a cruel mockery of life. He was brought to her very feet; and ere the ebbing wave could snatch him back, she had seized him, and, with the help of a man who hastened to her aid, he was carried up the beach, beyond its power. Life had too evidently departed to leave any place for hope even in Katy's heart. Such honor as could be done to that poor wreck of humanity she would do; but the fierce, bold spirit was beyond her reach. And, with the silent, uninvited assistance of Luce, all had been done that was possible, with such means and appliances as theirs, to hide the ghastliness and the debasement which death had wrought; and now, like that "last friend" whom the pencil of Landseer has made immortal, Katy sat beside her dead, alone. Tearless and still as that dead himself, she sat through the day's waning hours, while others were passing and repassing her, though, as we have said, they came not near unless they had some necessary question to ask. But even this ceased when night closed in, and the wreckers had retired to their own dwellings, and the few within her home had gone to rest. Ben Ham and Mr. Devereux had each offered to watch by the body during the night; but she had, with an almost angry decision, declined their offers, and they left her. Then, for the first time, her misery found voice, yet not words. Covering her face with her apron, she rocked herself to and fro, keeping time to her

movement with a low, moaning sound, like one in physical pain.

The night was clear, but very cold. The stars glittered, and the new moon beamed calmly down from a sky of darkest blue. Their light fell on a yet unquiet sea, whose waves flashed back a white glare, as they broke upon the gleaming sands of the deserted beach, where all was as still as though human passion had never disturbed its echoes.

As the evening approached, Violet, who had remained quietly in the little cabin all day, expressed a wish to leave it, feeling that she had no right to keep its possessors from their own hearth, though quite agreeing with Mr. Devereux that it would not be agreeable for her to meet them at present.

"I will go up to the room I occupied when I was last here," Violet said, half rising as she spoke; but Mr. Devereux's arm placed her back on her pillows, while he answered, with a quiet decision that seemed to Violet to render opposition difficult, if not impossible, "You must remain here to-night. It is too cold for you above; and that is my room now."

She was silent a moment; but then the remembrance of Katy, and the old habit of considering her comfort, and regarding her as an object of reverence, stimulated her to further remonstrances. With a rising color and a little hesitation of manner, she said, "But, indeed, Mr. Devereux, I ought to go!"

"You cannot go," he replied, with a smile; "and obligation ceases with ability."

Her nice conscience and kindly heart were not yet satisfied; and she began, raising her eyes to his, "But, Mr. Devereux, it is not right ——"

The grave expression in his eyes checked her before he had uttered a word.

"Violet," he asked, "can you not trust me?"

She laid both her hands in that which rested on the arm of her couch, without a word.

"I have not forgotten that you have called her mother. It is her own choice not to come here to-night. I will see that she is comfortable."

When Mr. Devereux was leaving the cabin, he said to Luce, "You will lock the door; and, till I speak to you, you will suffer no one to come in — or to go out, either," he added, with a playful glance at Violet.

"I guess thar need n't ter be no cussin' an' swarin' in the ship, ef he bin the cap'in," said Luce, as she obeyed his direction.

"Why, Luce?" asked Violet.

"'Cause, them cusses an' swars to make the men mind. An' I sort o' think the men would n't wait for that to mind *him*."

Sea and sky were crimson with the coming sun when Violet arose, the next morning. The quiet night had invigorated her, yet her heart still beat tumultuously, and her eye glanced quickly and somewhat wildly around her at a sudden step or voice, showing that the shaken nerves had not regained their steadiness. The paleness of her cheek and languor of her eye were more evident, too, when she moved about in the dark dress — the object of Luce's care — which she wore to-day, than when reclining on her couch, clad in white. The bedding had been removed, the fire burned brightly in the little stove, and, with the help of Luce, Violet had succeeded in giving a comfortable, cosey air to the little cabin before Mr. Devereux presented himself at the door, which had, till then, been kept carefully locked. Luce passed out as he entered. She was impatient to get at Katy's closet, to make a pot of coffee and prepare the breakfast.

Violet held out her hand with a cheerful "good-morning," but Mr. Devereux's was given in a mute caress. Then, without withdrawing the arm which he had thrown around

her, he led her to the couch, and seated himself beside her.

"You are looking quite like yourself, my Violet," he said, as he looked into her downcast face, bright with the flush which he had himself called there. She raised her eyes with a little effort to his, which, even while they smiled on her, wore an expression of gravity that alarmed her.

"Is anything the matter, Mr. Devereux?" she cried, growing pale with apprehension of she knew not what.

"Nothing new, dear Violet; but I do not think it right longer to keep from you something that I fear will grieve and shock your kind, generous heart, though, in truth," — and his brow darkened, — "he has given you more reason to rejoice than to grieve at his death."

Violet trembled slightly.

"Did you not tell me he had come to shore?" she asked, softly.

"Yes, my Violet; but I did not say that he had come alive."

They were silent a while; then Violet, in the same subdued tones, asked, "Where is she?"

"Where she has been since yesterday noon — watching by his side," answered Mr. Devereux.

"O, that should not be! — let me go to her!" said Violet. "She always meant to be kind to me."

"At least, we will not remember any unkindness now; but you must compose yourself before I shall feel safe in letting you go."

"O, do not stop me, Mr. Devereux! I shall be better when I am doing something!"

Mr. Devereux yielded; and, leaning on his arm, Violet left the cabin. The air beyond it struck chill upon her, and Mr. Devereux felt her shiver; but, while he thought anxiously of her, and doubted whether the interest he could not help feeling in poor Katy had not made him risk too

much in permitting her to undergo the agitation of an interview with her, Violet could think only of Katy, and her sad, cold, lonely vigil. As she approached her, however, she found that some kind hand — she afterwards discovered it was Mr. Devereux's — had taken such care of her comfort as she would permit. Various things — such as cloaks, old sails, etc. etc. — had been disposed around the seat she occupied, so as to protect her from the cold wind, which circulated very freely through the thin partitions and long, empty spaces around her; while, not very far from her, there blazed in the caboose a large wood fire. In the light of day, and the presence of others, Katy was again as still as yesterday, though the pallor that had overspread her bronzed and usually ruddy face, and the dim, dreary expression of her eyes, showed the sharpness of the sorrow which her hard, strong nature seemed to think it humiliating to reveal. As Violet looked in her face, she forgot everything but her suffering; and, leaving Mr. Devereux's arm, she threw herself on her knees beside her, and, trying to take her hands, said, "Mother! my poor mother! you must not stay here! Come with me!"

Katy moved impatiently away from her, withdrawing her hands out of her reach; and her pale face flushed, and her dim eyes lightened, as she answered, "An', ef ye 'd said that same ter him, nara one on us 'ud ha' been yere."

"Said what, mother? What could I have done for him?"

"Jist that same wot he did for ye when yer was a baby. Ef he 'd ha' leaved yer there like yer leaved him — no! go 'way, Wi'let!"

"Mother, I did not leave him! He left me on the wreck, long, long before Mr. Devereux came! He thought he could swim ashore; and, mother, he was kind to me at the last, and promised, if he got safe to shore, to try and help us."

"An' he 'd ha' did that same, he would! There was n't no man on the beach like Dick for savin' folks when the vessels come ashore. He knowed every cloud in the sky,

an' every wave o' the sea, 'bout here; an', ef he could n't get to shore, why, then nobody could n't; an' it an't nothin' agin a man that he can't do impossibilities."

"Certainly not, mother; he was a brave seaman," said Violet, soothingly.

Katy's thoughts reverted, as she heard her voice, to the subject of her leaving Dick; and, moving so as to bring Mr. Devereux also within her range of vision, she questioned, "An' yer did n't leave him, then?"

Both assured her that they had not; Violet repeating the account she had already given, and Mr. Devereux assuring her that not only was he guiltless of leaving Dick, he had done all that he could do without throwing away his own life, and that of others, to save him.

"Well, then, yer could n't help it, no more nor me, an' I an't got nothin' agin yer."

The momentary excitement had vanished from her face; the cold, weary, lifeless look had come back; and, again turning from them, she fixed her eyes on the object of her sad cares.

Violet looked appealingly at Mr. Devereux; for, like Luce, she thought there were few who could refuse to do his bidding. Gently drawing her aside, he said, "A cup of coffee would do her good; perhaps you could induce her to take it."

He was sure it would at least do Violet good to try. She was gone, in a moment, to prepare the coffee; and he took that opportunity to tell Katy that the clergyman would be there at ten o'clock to perform the funeral service, all the necessary preparations for it having been made, under his direction, by Mr. Ham.

"An' to think o' Dick dyin' afore him as was n't half as strong, an' as did n't know half as much as him!"

This was spoken with her eyes fixed upon the corpse, and rather in the manner of a soliloquy than of an address to Mr. Devereux. Scarcely knowing whether he or Mr.

Ham were the person thus contrasted with Dick, he seized on the remark as leading to conversation which might draw Katy's thoughts from their engrossing object of contemplation, and relieve, it might be, in some degree, the strain upon her nerves.

"Ah, Mrs. Van Dyke!" he said, kindly and earnestly, "our strength or our wisdom can do little for us when God touches us."

"Ah! yer may say that, an' it 's jist Him," answered Katy, raising her heavy eyes to Mr. Devereux, and speaking almost in a whisper, as if afraid that the great Being to whom she referred should hear her. "More 'an twelve year ago, when Cap'in Ross first comed here, I said to myself, 'Now, I knows what they used to tell me to the 'Sylum 'bout God, how He seed everything 's true.' I knowed then He sent him for Wi'let; an', yer see, ef I 'd ha' gi'en her ter him then, Dick 'ud ha' been yere safe an' soun'; an' now, don't yer think, may be He won't be so hard on him wha' he 's gone, ef I mek it right, an' gie her ter him, an' the trunks an' all?"

"I am sure, at least, that He will be better pleased with you for your doing what you feel to be right."

"Yis, an', ef I done it for Dick, won't it be jis' all as one as ef he done it hisself? I wish Cap'in Ross been yere, so I could do it this very minute. Yer see, I know it must be ter him, 'cause He bringed him here so long ago. Now, could n't ye write him a bit letter, an' tell him ter come jis' as quick as he can, an' Wi'let must stay yere till he comes?"

Violet at that moment presented herself, with the cup of coffee, and, hearing only the last few words, answered, before Mr. Devereux could speak, "Only drink this for me, and I will do as you wish, mother."

Katy was surprised into acquiescence. Having drunk the coffee, she gave Violet back the cup, saying, "You 're a good child, Wi'let, an' ye 'll forgive Dick ——"

"Mother, I forgave him before we parted, and prayed God to forgive him."

"Did yer? That was very good o' you, Wi'let, it was, an' I'll remember it, I will; but now you must go in the cabin."

"Let me stay with you, mother, if you will not go in."

"No, no, Wi'let! — though it's very good on you — but, yer see, I sort o' think he would n't like it, may be; but you can pray for him, Wi'let."

Violet looked with an anxious, puzzled countenance to Mr. Devereux, for it seemed to her that Katy's mind was wandering. He better understood its dim glimpses of a future state, and of our relations to it, and to Him who is our great Lawgiver and Judge. This was no time to enlighten or oppose her; and he led Violet back into the cabin, giving her some idea, as he went, of Katy's peculiar state of mind, and of the influence which it seemed likely to exert upon her conduct to herself.

On the last sad details in connection with Dick, so important to Katy, and of so little consequence to any other person, we need not linger. All that could be done to make them noteworthy was done by Katy. More than one gold piece, drawn from some obscure and unsuspected receptacle, did she expend in procuring carriages; two of which were brought from Squam, that in which Mr. Devereux had come making a third. The clergyman who officiated was the same good man who had been with them when little Bessie was laid in her early grave, and who had since preached to them several times. Katy would have been better pleased that he should have worn a gown and used a book; but, as he assured her that he had neither, she was obliged to dispense with them.

From the grave-yard Katy returned to enter at once upon all the bustle of her daily life. Far divorced, by her life of poverty and labor, from that indulgence of grief which is too often but an expression of refined selfishness, she was

equally far from the gentle, cheerful submission of the Christian heart. The kindly, contented look which her face had been accustomed to wear was gone. Her features were rigid, her expression hard, her voice sharp, her words impatient. When she entered the cabin, on her return from the grave, Violet, who was there alone, stepped forward to meet her, and to assist her in taking off her cloak; but she refused her help, turning sullenly away, and saying, "I an't none o' yer ladies, wot can't help myself!"

Luce had already, under the direction of Violet, restored things, throughout the house, as much as possible to their usual aspect, and had commenced in the caboose some preparation for dinner; but Katy at once entered on her business as mistress, and dismissed Luce, without either ceremony or thanks, from her place. Luce walked into the cabin, and, seating herself near the stove, took a pipe from her pocket, and, lighting it, began to smoke in silence.

"Luce, where is my mother? Could you not help her?"

"I was a helpin', honey, but she don' want me; and better let 'em work; — work the best thing, yer see, when folks feel bad."

And the hours passed on, and Katy toiled on, with bitter, fierce spirit, which would not bow down and kiss the rod. More than twelve years before, as she herself acknowledged, the opportunity to do a just and kind action had been given her — one of those gleams of light, too, which come direct from Heaven, had visited her darkened mind, and revealed to her what God demanded; but the love of gain had overborne conscience, and dimmed the light of heavenly truth in her soul. She had hoped by a half-way obedience to gain her own ends, and yet elude the divine displeasure. God had forborne long with her; but his long-suffering, instead of leading her to repentance, had made her bolder in wrong. And now he had laid his hand upon her. Dick, who was to have shared her anticipated gain, was lying cold and still beneath the white sands of

the beach, and the gain itself was dropping from her relaxed and trembling hand. She was afraid to continue her hold on Violet; yet she yielded it slowly, sullenly, — sometimes determined to cling to it through all, that she might secure from her the duty and consideration of a child, doubly desirable to her now, — sometimes, as she thought of Dick, longing, with wild, superstitious dread, at once to make restitution in his name of that which had been so unjustly withheld, and therefore impatient for the arrival of Capt. Ross, to whom she felt it must be made. Having heard nothing of Dick's confession to Violet, she was quite unconscious that further concealment was no longer in her power; that, indeed, only the pleadings of Violet, pleadings of a tender pity for her sorrows, prevented Mr. Devereux from claiming the trunks whose possession she had acknowledged in her half-forgotten, wandering speeches, and bearing them and Violet herself away from her.

He more than half repented his consent to delay, at least for one more day, any decided action of this kind, as he watched Violet's dreamy eye, which seemed to be looking away from the present into the dim past, or the yet unveiled future, and as he found that she turned reluctantly, even at his call, from these contemplations. As for her, she was ever striving to catch the features of a face faintly pictured before her. Now they presented the lineaments she had known and loved so long, and her heart bounded with joy, and her lips would almost utter the sweet word "Father!" Then they would float away into dim distance, and fancy would sketch a stranger face, from which she shrank back, pale and chilled. She would have walked to the grave-yard, — to the grave of her mother, the grave so strangely interesting to her long ago, when she knew not who lay there; but Mr. Devereux would not permit her to expose herself to the cold, in her still feeble condition. A little vexed that he could not win her thoughts away

from this subject, he went out, at length, to take a lonely stroll upon the beach.

And Capt. Ross, urged on by fears which he dared not shape even into thoughts, through days and nights of voiceless prayer, without even the desire for rest, with feverish haste was journeying on. Four days and nights of travel by steamboat and stage-coach had brought him to Philadelphia. There he was compelled to pause, that he might learn the nearest way to Squam, whither he had decided to go immediately himself, writing to Dr. Jamieson to take such steps as his cooler judgment should dictate for the discovery of Violet, should she have been taken to New York. Hiring a private conveyance in Philadelphia, he had set out, to his driver's openly expressed dissatisfaction, in the midst of the storm, and was even now coming wearily over the frozen beach.

. Restlessly Violet wandered about the little cabin, looking now upon the wintry sun, descending through a cloudless sky, to the dark line of pine forest behind which he was an hour hence to sink, and now, through the opposite windows, upon the darkening sea. But what object is that which comes between her and the sea? It is a carriage, the leather top closely buttoned down, the glasses raised. She can see no one; yet her heart bounds, her color flushes and then fades from her face, and Luce, still smoking quietly there, and Katy, rushing hither and thither in almost aimless hurry, are startled as she glides noiselessly, fleetly, like a spirit, by them, and, throwing open the outer door with a quick, nervous touch, falls into the arms of Captain Ross, who is already standing there. Mr. Devereux is near them; for he had met Capt. Ross, and, returning with him, had told him all her deliverance, making light only of his own share in it. And now she lies in the arms of Capt. Ross, even as she had lain in Mr. Devereux's when last she crossed that threshold, with closed eyes and pallid face; and, as he raises her in his arms and looks with speechless tenderness

upon his faded flower, he finds it hard to forgive, even in his grave, the man who robbed it of its bloom. While he bears her to the cabin, Mr. Devereux walks straight to Katy, and, with the quiet manner which usually accompanies a firm resolve, says, "Captain Ross is come.'

"So I seen!" answered Katy, trying, though with trembling hand, to continue her work of filling the kettle by dipping water from a pail. But Mr. Devereux takes the dipper from her hand, as he says, "You will get those trunks now."

Katy raises herself from her stooping posture, and looks in his face. His eyes fasten themselves steadily on hers, and she yields; her eyes waver, she turns away, going towards the cabin. He follows, saying, "I will help you, if it be necessary." She does not answer, but goes on, her hand fumbling meanwhile in her pocket. She stops before one of the state-rooms outside of the little cabin, and, drawing out a key, opens the door. There is nothing to be seen but the empty berths, and on the floor two trunks, the one quite large, the other small.

"Have you the keys?" Mr. Devereux asks, as he stoops to lift the larger. Katy hands them to him, without a word.

"Can you carry that?" he asks, very gently; and Katy answers by raising it from the floor. Once more he pauses before he enters the cabin, to ask, "In which of them is the picture?"

Rather by movement than by speech, she indicates the one he carries, and they proceed. He seems to himself to be walking in a dream, and yet he recognizes every minute detail about the trunk he carries. He perceives that it is of English manufacture; he sees V. R. on the top, formed by brass tacks driven into it. His eyes grow misty, and he can see no more. Now they are in the cabin, and have laid down the trunks before Capt. Ross, who raises his eyes from Violet's pale face resting on his shoulder, and fixes them with surprise on Mr. Devereux

Without a word, he bends down, and unlocks the trunk which he has brought, Katy still standing by. Something has aroused Capt. Ross. Is it some recognition of the trunk, or of its contents? He bends forward, and at the movement Violet's attention is aroused. Mr. Devereux has found the picture, and hands it to Capt. Ross; and as, with shaking hands, he unclasps the case, Violet, who understands all at a glance, sits with flushing face and parted lips, and gaze intently fixed upon it. The clasp gives way, the case flies open, and the picture is before them. It falls from the trembling hand of Capt. Ross; — he covers his pale face, and, with quivering lips, gasps forth, "My murdered wife!" — while Violet, clasping her arms around his neck, and pressing her lips to his again and again, with a boldness for which all his kindness hitherto had never given her courage, cries between every caress, in love's sweetest and softest tones, "My father! my father!" Those words at last found their way to his heart, and drew him back from the past to the present. Suddenly he clasped her to him in a passionate embrace; then, suffering her face to fall back upon his arm, he perused every feature, from the lovely, smiling lips to the soft, dewy eyes, and again folding her gently to his bosom, he murmured, "My child! My Violet's child! Thank Heaven for that!"

Mr. Devereux glided from the cabin, beckoning to Katy to follow him; but she lingered a moment, to say, "I done it for Dick, yer see; so it's jist as ef he done it hisself."

She was unheard — the father and daughter were at that moment the world to each other.

"Father!" repeated Violet, softly, "never again Papa Ross!"

"And I would have had you marry Edward!" cried Capt. Ross, shuddering with a sudden pang of memory. Then, lifting his face, all quivering with emotion, towards heaven, he exclaimed, "O, Father! I thank thee that in the midst

of judgment thou hast remembered mercy. Teach us now and evermore to say, Thy will, not ours, be done!"

Violet breathed a soft "Amen!" and both grew calmer under the soothing influence of prayer.

A few articles of clothing, such as could neither be worn by Katy herself nor altered for a child's wear; a few trinkets, which derived their chief value from their association with her to whom they had belonged; a tress of golden-brown hair, and a half-finished letter,—these were the treasures that these trunks contained,—treasures that Capt. Ross would have thought cheaply purchased by the sacrifice of half his fortune. That letter explained all that was mysterious in the fate of the writer. It was as follows:

"DEAR HUSBAND: Here I am, within two days' sail of your own dear land; and yet they tell me that when I have actually arrived in the port for which we are bound—New York—I shall be many hundred miles away from you, if you should be still detained in New Orleans by your wound. O, that I had the wings of a dove,—or of the swifter eagle,—how soon I should be beside you! Even baby should not keep me, I think, though she is the *darlingest* baby that the sun ever shone on. I have just showed her your miniature, and she stretches out her hands to it from her pillows on the floor, crying, 'Papa! papa!'—her very first word. I wonder if she will know and love the real papa as well. I am afraid that the little miss already has a partiality for gold and diamonds.

"Will you think me a heartless mother, when you hear that I have left our Edward in England? You would not, if you knew what a cruel pang the leaving him cost me; but, as I wrote you before, he takes cold easily since he recovered from the measles, and his physician would not consent to the exposure of the sea voyage at this rough season for him, though he thinks that when the weather becomes milder it may prove his best restorative. Our kind

friends at tne rectory will take the best possible care of him. Still, it was like leaving a piece of my heart to leave him.

"And yet I scarcely felt it at the time; for my heart was full of you, — wounded, suffering. They told me it was slightly, and I dare not think it otherwise. Even now I can scarcely bear this delay. I regret exceedingly having changed my destination; for the Cotton Plant, in which I had first determined to sail from Liverpool, was going to Charleston, and that would have taken me so much nearer to you.

"I hope the Cotton Plant will not get in before us, or that the letters from the rectory, which were to announce my departure, may be delayed; otherwise you will, I fear, become uneasy about your two Violets before this can reach you. They know nothing at the rectory of any change in my plans, for I had no time to write them before sailing. I was already on my way to Liverpool when I met, at the first stage in my journey, Mr. Edwards, an old friend of my father. He was on his way from his home in ——shire to Portsmouth, having already taken passage in this ship, with the master of which he is acquainted. He urged me so strongly to come with him, promising me his own state-room, if there was no other to be had, that, feeling drearily enough at finding myself, for the first time in my life, without other protection than that of a servant, I consented, — and here I am. The good, fatherly man has fulfilled all his promises of kindness. You shall thank him for me some day."

The letter was continued on another day, as follows:

"I have just come down from the deck; and, though the ship is pitching so that I am afraid I can hardly write legibly, I feel as if I could not resist the desire to talk with you on paper. Our baby is in the upper berth, sleeping sweetly. I have fastened her in it, so that nothing I think can throw her out. I verily believe hers is the only quiet heart on

board the ship. Mr. Edwards is evidently uneasy; and I fancied the captain's eye was not quite untroubled, when he advised me to come down here. And I — I am thinking of you; of your tenderness to your Violet; of how dreary the world will be to you without her. My eyes are dim, my hand trembles; — I can write no more; but, blessed be His holy name! I can pray, — for you, for my baby, for myself! A sure refuge, in every time of trouble, is this! I have long trusted it for myself. I must learn to trust it for my dearer self, — à Dieu, my beloved."

The last rays of the setting sun had faded from the little cabin, which was lighted only by the red glow of the fire, when Violet opened the door, and called softly for Mr. Devereux. He was pacing slowly the long space beyond; and, gentle as was her call, he was instantly at her side. She came to ask that he would find Katy, and bring her into the cabin.

"My father," she said, "wishes to hear all she can tell."

With that all the reader is already acquainted. It was heard by Capt. Ross in unbroken silence; with sad, stern eyes, that fastened themselves unwaveringly on the speaker, and with a face of ghastly pallor. Violet felt a sudden spasm in the hand that clasped hers, as he heard that on the floor of the very room in which they sat the wife he had mourned so deeply and so long had been found a corpse; but no other outward sign of emotion escaped him.

Katy had ceased speaking for some minutes ere a sound broke the stillness of the little cabin. Then the pale lips of Capt. Ross unclosed, and, in a low, measured tone, which showed that every word came with effort, he said, "I will say now all that I can ever say on this subject. For the care which you took of my child in her motherless infancy, to which I doubtless owe her life, I can never sufficiently reward you. I desire to forget the rest. An annuity of

three hundred dollars will, I think, keep you from want. You shall receive it in quarterly payments —"

"Yer too good, sir, ye are. An' if ye 'd jist say ye 'd forgie Dick, I would n't ax no more on ye!" said Katy.

There was deep silence. Violet's heart went up in prayer, while her eyes were fixed upon her father's face. She saw the struggle in his soul. The Christian triumphed!

"A sinner myself, God forbid that I should refuse to forgive a fellow-sinner! He is dead, I am told. I will have a stone placed over him that shall record that he rescued my child from a wrecked ship. Will this satisfy you?"

"Yis, indeed, sir; — an' I think, arter ye say that, them can't be hard on him."

Who Katy meant by them, Capt. Ross did not understand. She was evidently greatly pleased, and that was enough for him.

As Katy left the cabin, Capt. Ross held out his hand to Mr. Devereux, saying, "You loved her, too, I remember."

"Better than I ever loved any other, except her daughter."

"And she loved you. It is a great satisfaction to me to know that she would have given her ready sanction to your marriage with Violet."

Still clasping the hand of Capt. Ross, Mr. Devereux bent down and touched Violet's forehead with his lips; it was as if he had claimed her anew under this new sanction. And the memory which was so green and pleasant in their hearts secured for the future an affectionate cordiality between Capt. Ross and himself, which was all that had been wanting to complete Violet's happiness.

"I would like to stand with you beside my mother's grave, before we go," Violet whispered, the next morning, to Mr. Devereux, as they rose from their hurried breakfast, — a breakfast more in name than in reality.

"But your father —" he began, with a doubtful glance at Capt. Ross.

"He was there for more than an hour, in the early morning. He will not go again, I think."

And so, saying that they would walk on and get into the carriage when it should overtake them, they set out, leaving their coachman, when he had breakfasted, to arrange the baggage under the direction of Capt. Ross.

Before they left the house, they had gone together to take leave of Katy. They found her looking more cheerful than they had seen her since the wreck, standing near the caboose, talking with Ben Ham; while Luce sat by the fire, enjoying her pipe, and Mike and the coachman were finishing their breakfast, not far off."

"I have come to say good-by, mother," said Violet, going to Katy, and taking her hand; while Mr. Devereux stopped to speak to Mike.

"I an't no mother now, Wi'let," Katy answered, sadly.

"Yes, always my kind foster-mother." And Violet put her arm around Katy's neck, and kissed her brown cheek.

"I 'd like to see the body would n't be kind to you!" almost sobbed Katy, overpowered by this unexpected caress. "An', now, I never to see you agin! Ef I jis' had yer pictur', 't would be somethin' ——"

"You shall have it, if you would like it. I will send it to you from New York. And you will not be alone, — Luce says she is to stay with you. But I wish you could be persuaded to go to some nice country place, where you could live in comfort, and where Luce could do something to support herself."

"Well, yer see, Wi'let, that 'ud be very good for some folks; but I don' like to leave Dick; an', then, seems to me, 't would be sort o' lonesome, somehow, without the sea, — an' Luce thinks so, too; so I guess we 'll do better here."

"And, Mr. Ham, the minister told me yesterday you had learned to read."

"I been a tryin', miss; an' I can spell out a chapter in the good Book pretty smart," Mr. Ham replied, coloring up under his brown skin, and twirling his piece of a hat with awkward bashfulness.

"And you will come and read sometimes for my good mother here?"

"That I will, ma'am, sartin."

"And Luce will listen to you, too, for my sake."

"I'd listen to the devil, ef ye axed me, honey," said Luce, rubbing her rough hand across her eyes as she spoke.

"And, Mr. Ham, you are one of the brave men who saved us from perishing on the wreck. I shall always remember you. Thank the others for me. I had hoped to see them all ——"

"O, ma'am! we'd never ha' stopped to think a minute, ef we'd ha' knowed ye was there. An' the cap'in's made us all rich, he has,—he an' Muster Duvo. We was to have a hunderd dollars, an' now the cap'in's gie'd us twenty more apiece."

"I am glad of it, Mr. Ham. I am sure you deserved it all."

Mr. Devereux now came up to remind Violet that they had no time to spare. He had finished his conference with Mike, who looked exceedingly pleased; whether with the present gift of five dollars, or the promise of endeavoring to procure for him steady employment with the florist in New York who had furnished the "bookies," it would take a nicer casuist than we pretend to be, to determine.

The adieus were made, not without tears on both sides; for, at this last moment, Violet thought only of the good she had received at Squan. Katy's last words were an entreaty that she "would n't let the cap'in forget the stone over Dick."

The morning was piercingly cold, and Violet had reason

to thank the kind thoughtfulness which had made Mrs. Baillie insist, somewhat to the annoyance of Capt. Ross, in his hurry and agitation, that he should take with him at least that one of her trunks containing articles of dress most needed in a Northern winter. Leaving the gray cloak to Luce, she wore now, instead, a dark silk pelisse, with a fur cape and muff, and a quilted travelling-bonnet of the same color.

All was icy on the beach. The ocean spray froze as it fell, glistening in the early sunlight like diamond sparks. The very graves were bright with them, but they looked none the less sad and lonely; and Violet's heart ached at the thought of leaving there the young and beautiful mother whose shadowy image had touched her tenderest feelings. Still supported by Mr. Devereux, she bowed her head upon the rough wooden board which marked that mother's last resting-place, while even from her tears there went up a thanksgiving to Him who had guided her orphaned childhood into the paths of peace, who had given her strength to bear the cross, and who had so soon exchanged that cross for a richer crown of joy than, in her wildest dreams, she had dared to anticipate.

"My Violet, the carriage is in sight," Mr. Devereux whispered, at length.

"O, Mr. Devereux! must we leave her here alone?" she cried, raising her face, all bathed in tears, to him.

"Not long, dear Violet," he replied, kissing the tears away. "Capt. Ross and I have already arranged that. As soon as warmer weather makes it practicable, this precious dust shall be taken up, and we will bear it with us to England, and lay it where her kindred rest, and where we ourselves shall one day be laid."

This removed Violet's last feeling of reluctance in leaving Squan Beach.

It had been determined by Capt. Ross and Mr. Devereux to go on to New York, and give Violet time to recruit there,

under the care of the friendly Dr. Jamieson. This was all that was settled at present. The close carriage in which Capt. Ross had come from Philadelphia would take them; and Mr. Devereux's wagon would carry their trunks and Harrington, who had begged most piteously that Capt. Ross would not leave him behind, but would take him as his servant till he could get an opportunity of sending him home to Georgia by land. From the sea he shrank with unconquerable dread; but everything else he would encounter to get home.

"I neber bin come 'way, massa, ef dem no bin witch me."

Such was his firm belief; and his extraordinary experiences were destined long to confirm the superstitions of his race in his own home.

CHAPTER XV.

"If it were now to die,
'T were now to be most happy; for, I fear,
My soul hath her content so absolute,
That not another comfort like to this
Succeeds in unknown fate."

SHAKSPEARE.

In the mean time, life had gone brightly and gayly with Edward Ross. The arrangements at Ross Hall which his father had intrusted to him were all executed by good-natured Miss Briôt; he only making his appearance in time to execute the contract for a five-years' lease of the Hall with the tenant whom Mr. Merton had found in an old college friend of his own. Then, having seen Miss Briôt to the house of Dr. Jamieson, where she had been invited to remain till she should form another engagement as a governess, Edward proceeded to Richmond, Virginia, near which place Mr. Peyton resided at a country-seat.

Caroline Peyton was a bright, animated girl, with a heart full of all warm and kindly and generous affections, and a mind which, though somewhat irregularly cultivated, was active and energetic, and had preserved, through the temptations of the life of a belle, its naturally warm sympathies with all that was noble, and good, and truthful. Belle though she was, if to be an object of very general admiration may give that name, she was not beautiful. And yet, it may be that the clear, bright brunette, with her dazzling eyes, her bands of hair smooth and black as the raven's wing, and her expression full of good-humor and intelligence, gave as much pleasure, even to the eye, as the

possessor of more symmetrical features could have done. She was tall and well formed, graceful in movement, and a fine rider, — an accomplishment which Edward greatly valued in a woman. He had become acquainted with her as a traveller, in gay coteries, and amidst the excitements of constant change, and he admired her; he saw her in the quiet of her domestic circle, brightening and adorning her widowed father's home, and he loved her. But Caroline had just the least bit in the world of coquetry in her nature. She would not for the world have invited attentions which she never meant to accept, but she did find a perverse delight in playing with the heart whose devotion was at once her joy and pride. Edward's impetuous temper made it a somewhat dangerous amusement, it is true, but for that very reason the more exciting. It is from the capture of the fish which most exercises his skill that the angler derives the most pleasure. But he or she who plays with a human heart engages in a game whose combinations and results are beyond all finite caloulation; a game which, innocent as it may seem in the beginning, is full of evil to both parties — of more, perhaps, to him whom it hardens and debases than to him whom it tortures. Fortunately for Edward, and, if our opinion be correct, yet more fortunately for Caroline, her play was soon interrupted by an incident which appealed so strongly to her heart as to overpower the influence of her coquetry.

A cold day had succeeded a week or more of warm and damp weather. The sun seemed to have refreshed himself, and arose with new vigor and brightness, "rejoicing as a strong man to run a race;" and Edward Ross arose with a spirit almost as bright as the sun. He was to be at Mr. Peyton's to breakfast, by an engagement made the evening before with Caroline. On that evening she had been more gentle, kinder than he had ever known her before. He had gone to her desponding, almost determined to take his final adieu of her whose heart he could not hope to touch.

He had found her with other guests. He could not seek to withdraw her from them; but, with woman's quick instinct, she had seemed to divine his state of mind, and by a thousand slight and delicate attentions, by a look, a movement, a word, which none else might perceive or understand, she had communicated to him her sympathy, and reäwakened his dying hopes. The ride, which she had found some ready excuse for declining whenever he had proposed it of late, she had graciously consented to take with him on the following day, inviting him to breakfast at Peytonville, that they might set out at an early hour, and seconding, by a smile, her father's further invitation to dinner. A brisk canter of two miles over a country road, through a clear, bracing air, was just in harmony with Edward's feelings on that eventful morning, and he arrived at Mr. Peyton's as much elated as he had on the previous evening been depressed. Untaught by the past, he suffered his mistress to perceive it, and her tone was changed. The ride, of which she had spoken with animated interest the last evening, was now treated with the languid toleration of a necessary act of courtesy. "She hoped Mr. Ross would enjoy it, but the morning seemed very cold," — with a slight shiver.

"Pray, do not sacrifice your own comfort in any degree to my enjoyment," Edward said.

"O, I dare say I can make myself comfortable," — with a resigned air, — "only one hates to wrap up in riding."

Edward bit his lip with vexation.

"Riding! — are you going to ride, this fine, breezy morning, Miss Peyton?" asked a young gentleman of the neighborhood, who, having some business with Mr. Peyton, had called at the breakfast hour, that he might see him before he went into Richmond.

"Yes; — will you not join us, Mr. Vernon?"

"I shall be delighted to do so, if you will permit me."

"I am sure Mr. Ross will be greatly the gainer by your joining us. You can point out the beauties to him; and,

once relieved from the necessity of looking out for the proper places to admire, I shall find the ride very agreeable."

"To be sure you will!" said the gentleman, with simplicity.

"And, Vernon, come back and dine with us; Mr. Ross will be here," exclaimed Mr. Peyton.

"I am much obliged, Mr. Peyton; I would come with pleasure, but I have an engagement at home, at one o'clock."

Edward had almost determined, had Mr. Vernon accepted, to find some excuse for returning immediately to Richmond, though he knew not what it should be. Now, he determined to *endure* the ride with this "pert coxcomb," — so he termed poor Mr. Vernon in his thoughts, — for the sake of the opportunity he should afterwards enjoy of a full and frank understanding with Miss Peyton.

At ten o'clock the horses were brought to the door by Miss Peyton's groom, a respectable-looking, gray-headed negro. Edward stepped forward to assist her in mounting, but she declined the courtesy.

"Pray, excuse me, Mr. Ross, but Daddy George knows how I like to be helped. — Come, daddy!"

The black hand was extended, the tiny foot placed in it, and Miss Peyton was in her saddle.

Edward walked gloomily away, and, mounting his own horse, fell back, suffering Mr. Vernon to precede him, and to take his place at Miss Peyton's side; but his fair tormentor felt that in her last act she had somewhat overstepped the line she had marked for herself, and she soon found some reason for claiming the attention of Mr. Ross, and bringing him to her other side. She was very gay and diverting during the whole ride, dividing her courtesies equally between her two attendants; but she won few words and fewer smiles from Edward. On their return, within a quarter of one o'clock, Mr. Vernon left them at the door.

Edward assisted Miss Peyton from her horse, an attention to which she submitted with the most faultless decorum. They proceeded together into the house, and Edward was just congratulating himself that at last his hour was come, when he found himself ushered into Mr. Peyton's study, and Caroline gliding away with a courteous apology for leaving him while she changed her habit. A quarter of an hour's enforced patience, and Edward heard a step. It was only a servant with wine and biscuits. Ten minutes more, and another servant entered, and offered to show him to a dressing-room, and perform the offices of a valet for him. He accepted the offer, but was in the study again in another fifteen minutes, just in time to see Mr. Peyton alight from his gig at the door, and to hear Miss Peyton greet him with "Papa, are you not earlier than usual?"

"A little, my dear," Mr. Peyton answered. "I met a friend from Washington, who has promised to come out and dine with us, and I want to give him some of that Amontillado; so I came home to see that there should be no mistake about it. O! by the by, where is Mr. Ross?"

"In your study, I believe."

"Well, here's a letter for him. It came this morning, and the people at his hotel sent it over to my office, because they heard him say he was coming here, and there was an order on it to forward if he were absent."

"I hope it brings no ill news," said Caroline, softly, with a little pang of conscience, as she took the letter from her father.

"O, I suspect not; business, probably. Give it to him. I will come as soon as I have seen to the wine, and have made a little change in my dress."

Caroline entered the study and presented the letter, apologizing for her long absence, with a manner subdued into unusual quietness. She was distrustful of the contents of that letter, and, saying, gently, "Pray, read your letter, Mr. Ross," she passed on to a seat near the fire, and, tak-

ing a book, pretended to be absorbed in its pages, though, in reality, far more occupied with her companion, whom she had placed herself in a position to observe. A moment's observation of the letter had made him avail himself of her permission to read it; for it was in his father's hand, and the post-mark was Norfolk. It contained but a few lines, and he had scarcely done more than glance hurriedly over them, when the hand in which he held the letter fell nerveless at his side, and, almost staggering to a chair, he sank into it, and, resting his elbow on its arm, dropped his head upon his hand. Again he raised the letter, but scarcely looked at it when it fell again, and a shudder passed over his frame as he covered his eyes with his hand. Caroline could stand it no longer. She approached him quickly, but softly, and said, with great gentleness of voice and manner, "Mr. Ross, I fear—"

He started, and strove to rise, turning to her as he did so a very pale and very sad face. She put her hand upon his arm, saying, "No—do not rise; let me give you a glass of wine; you are overcome; you have bad news, I fear; not of your father, I hope."

"I almost wish it were," he answered, after swallowing the glass of wine she had handed to him. "Nothing could be so terrible as this: my adopted sister in the hands of lawless men!" He shuddered again as he spoke, then added, "But I must go—I must do something—"

There was wildness both in his speech and in his eye. Thoroughly alarmed—for she had seen little of the workings of the stronger passions in man's nature—Caroline Peyton forgot her pride and her coquetry, and, taking his cold, nerveless hands in hers, she said, "You will not leave us so, Mr. Ross!" then, in a lower, softer tone, "You will not leave *me!*"

Even at that moment, her voice, her touch, controlled him. The color came back to his cheek—he clasped the

hands that had taken his, and said, with passionate emphasis, "Ah! if you only cared for my going, there would be comfort through it all."

It was not a time to withhold any comfort from him; and Caroline answered, with a heightened color, and a little stammering hesitation, which only gave greater force to her words, "I — I do care for it."

"Ah, yes! as you would care for that of —— But I thank you for your kindness, Miss Peyton; it is, perhaps, as well. I must think only of my poor Violet, now!"

He had dropped her hands, and spoke more calmly, though not less sadly.

"I am very sorry for her," said Caroline, softly, scarcely knowing what to say, yet wishing to say something.

He looked at her. There was something in her downcast face which he had never seen there before; was it all pity, or did she, indeed, love? The question, once propounded to his own heart, must be answered then and there. Youth knows not how to wait.

"Miss Peyton, I have no time for vain forms; but it needs not many words; you know that I love you — tenderly, passionately — as I believe man loves but once. May I hope? Do not trifle with me now — I cannot bear it! If I have the smallest place in your heart, let me see it. You may make me glad, even now, with a word."

She would have done much to make him glad; but how could she speak even one word? She stood before him with veiled eyes and silent lips — as none had ever seen Caroline Peyton stand before. He might have been satisfied, but he was not; and repeated, sadly, "Then I must go without one word — even one look!"

A sudden, momentary lifting of the eyes — then they sank again; but her hands were laid in his, and, as he drew nearer to her, her bowed head rested on his arm.

The door opened suddenly, and Mr. Peyton entered, say-

ing, "Mr. Ross—why—what's this? Caroline?" he exclaimed, as his eyes rested on the figures before him.

Caroline did not stay to answer. In the first moment's surprise, Edward relinquished her hands, and she sprang from the room, leaving him to make all necessary explanations to her father. They were soon made. Edward was not much given to circumlocution, and had no time for it now.

"I love your daughter, Mr. Peyton."

"And apparently my daughter loves you, sir."

"I hope so, sir; and yet, I have not heard it from her own lips."

"I thought, when I entered, you were receiving it from her own lips, in the most agreeable possible way."

There was a good-humored twinkle in the eyes of Mr. Peyton, which set Edward's heart at ease. He blushed like a girl—Mr. Peyton liked him none the less for that,—but he laughed, too.

"I have to apologize to you, Mr. Peyton, for not having spoken to you before addressing your daughter; but I have had so little reason to hope till the very last—and then my declaration was hurried from me by intelligence which makes it necessary for me to leave Richmond without an hour's delay. Have I your permission to return in the new relation which I dare to hope—to believe—that your daughter—that—that—"

Edward had spoken very smoothly while the question was of his obligations to Mr. Peyton; but when it was of Caroline and his relations to her, he grew agitated, bewildered, and broke down.

Mr. Peyton saw his agitation, and, though not without some of his daughter's spirit of mischief, relieved him.

"Caroline has had her own way so long, Mr. Ross, that I think she must continue to have it till she gets another ruler. In this case, let me say, I have no desire to interfere with her choice. I knew your father, many years ago. I

think I know you. I am satisfied with my daughter's choice — a father can say no more."

"Thank you! thank you, sir, for saying so much!" exclaimed Edward, grasping the hand which Mr. Peyton had extended to him. "This will strengthen me for whatever I may have to bear while I am absent."

"But where are you going, and what carries you away so unexpectedly?"

"Did I not tell you, sir? The letter you brought was from my father; he writes from Norfolk; he was hurrying on from the South in pursuit of my adopted sister, who had been seized and carried off by ruffians — one of them her own father, a wrecker of Squan Beach."

"Her own father! Are you sure she did not go willingly? I have great faith in blood; you know the Bible tells us the dog and the sow, after all your teaching, will return to their filthy practices —"

"O, Mr. Peyton! You do not know our Violet: the purest, loveliest — if an angel could dwell on earth, it would be in Violet's form."

"Take care! take care! I shall report you to Caroline!" said Mr. Peyton, laughing; for Edward's words were earnest, and his face in a glow of feeling.

"I should love and reverence the angel, sir, as I love and reverence my sister; but I should prefer a woman for my wife."

"And what does your father wish you to do in these circumstances?"

"His letter is written in too much agitation to give me any very definite direction; but I shall go first to New York, where my father expected to be in four days from the time he wrote — and that was three days ago. He may determine to go, first, to Squan Beach, if he can get there readily from Philadelphia. I shall go to the beach, myself, if I do not find my father at the hotel to which he has directed me to address his letters."

"But you will take your dinner before you set out?"

"Excuse me, Mr. Peyton. I feel every moment I stay, now, to be a sin. I shall want a little time in Richmond, before the steamboat starts for Baltimore;—but—if you could induce Miss Peyton to see me for one moment—I should like to take leave of her, before I go."

"You would like to receive that assurance from her own lips, again! Well, I will tell her;" and, with a good-natured laugh, Mr. Peyton left the study. The thought of his daughter's engagement gave him none of the anxious, tender emotions which it would have given a mother. He knew that the young man was of good family, with good character and good fortune, and was satisfied. His daughter, since she left boarding-school, had made his home much more agreeable; but, what then? he had not expected to keep her there always. She would, probably, still come to Virginia in the summer; and if he grew lonely in winter, Georgia was not so very far away, and his widowed sister would probably have no objections to come and keep house for him. And so he met Caroline without a cloud upon his brow, or an anxiety respecting her in his heart.

Thus, amidst smiles and tears, the lovers parted, and the clouds of present sorrow and dread that lowered over Edward were gilded by bright anticipations of a joyful future. Those clouds were soon to be dispersed. On inquiring for his father at the hotel to which he had been directed by him in New York, a waiter stepped forward with "I will show you the way to his parlor, sir;" and, preceding him to the door of a room on the second floor, hastened away, after saying, "That is the room, sir;" leaving Edward to announce himself. Throwing the door open, he entered. A gentleman who sat writing at a table nearly opposite the door looked up at the sudden noise. It was not his father.

"Excuse me, sir," said Edward, "for my intrusion; I was told that this was the parlor of Capt. Ross, my father."

"You were told correctly, — Mr. Edward Ross, of course. I do not know that my name is so well known to you as yours is to me — Mr. Devereux."

"Ah! yes, Mr. Devereux — I have heard Miss Briôt speak of you." Even then, he remembered the "*l'air noble*" of Miss Briôt, and confessed it had not been ill applied; but other thoughts crowded this away, and, with no perceptible pause, he continued, "Perhaps, sir, as you have seen my father, you can tell me something of Miss Van Dyke —"

"Not of Miss Van Dyke," Mr. Devereux answered, with a smile, "but of your sister Violet, I can tell you. She is quite safe, and her only ailment, Dr. Jamieson assures us, is the debility which always succeeds excitement in natures so finely organized as hers."

"But I do not understand you. You say, not Miss Van Dyke, but my sister Violet. They are the same."

"Excuse me; sit down a moment, for you look weary; you have travelled post haste, I dare say." Edward nodded. "Well, sit down, and let me explain my enigma. Did it never strike you that Violet — pardon my using her name thus — we are to be brothers one day." The gentlemen joined hands, and Mr. Devereux proceeded: "Did it never occur to you that she was too refined, too spiritual, to be the child of such people as those who claimed her?"

"Often — but I am impatient — you called her my sister."

"You know how mysteriously your mother and her infant disappeared?"

Mr. Devereux paused; a sudden tremor seized on Edward. "Go on!" he exclaimed, impatiently.

"The ship in which she took passage was wrecked at Squan Beach; the only living thing found on board was an infant child, bound fast into one of the upper berths of the cabin. The mother — your mother, Mr. Ross — lay dead upon the floor, above which the water had risen some two or three feet. The child was Violet."

"My mother! — My sister Violet! O! this is too much!" And Edward covered his face with his hands, to hide the quivering features, and the tears, which he feared would shame his manhood in Mr. Devereux's eyes. He quickly withdrew them, to ask, "How did you learn all this, and where did my father find Violet? My sister! my darling sister! I must go to her; — at Dr. Jamieson's, you say?"

"Stay, — I will go with you," said Mr. Devereux, rising quickly, and taking his cloak and a fur cap from the table; "I can answer your questions as we go along. You will probably find your father at Dr. Jamieson's. The doctor thought more perfect quiet than we could command at a hotel necessary to Violet, and he and Mrs. Jamieson very kindly insisted on having her with them."

While the gentlemen are on their way to Dr. Jamieson's, let us look in upon the group they will find assembled there. It is a cosey, happy party. The doctor lounges on a sofa on one side of the fireplace, with his loved Havana sending forth its fragrant wreaths, which, as they curl upward, he follows with an eye expressive of musing, philosophic contemplation. Near him, but not on the sofa, which is all his own, sits Mrs. Jamieson, to whom that cigar offers the most delicious perfume. On the other side of the fireplace is Capt. Ross, who also has a cigar, but seldom puts it to his lips, seeming to hold it rather for companionship with his old friend, than because he himself feels the need of its influence. His brow has lost much of its old sternness, and his smiles are more frequent and more bright than of old. Close beside him, on an ottoman, with her head resting against him, and his arm encircling her, so that his hand rests on her shoulder, and occasionally plays with the glittering ringlets of her hair, sits Violet, somewhat paler, it may be, than usual, — somewhat more languid, perhaps, in attitude and eye, — but with an expres-

sion that makes the languor and the paleness seem but excess of joy.

"What has become of my Lord Devereux?" Dr. Jamieson takes his cigar from his lips to ask,—the title being one of his own bestowing.

"I believe that he has become impatient of my delays, and gone home to write a letter to Mr. Merton," Capt. Ross says, looking smilingly down on Violet's flushing cheek.

The door-bell rings before the doctor can make the rejoinder that sparkles in his eye, and he pauses to listen, while Mrs. Jamieson says, "Now, Doctor, you really must not go out again! If it is anybody for you, send them next door, to Dr. Semple,"—a young physician, whom Lizzie has lately married, and whom the doctor has taken into partnership.

But the steps of those who have entered, advance steadily through the hall; the parlor-door opens, and Violet springs from her ottoman, and Capt. Ross rises as Edward appears. For a time, he sees none but Violet, and she has no thought but for him; while, from their hearts, throbbing with tumultuous joy, burst the exclamations, "My brother! my own dear brother Edward!" and, "My sister! my darling sister!"

Later in the evening, Edward entreats Violet to go to the next room with him; he has something for her private ear. And then she hears of Caroline Peyton; her beauty—for Edward thinks her beautiful—and her worth; and, last, not least, in Violet's esteem, any more than in his, her consciousness of his worth.

"And you are engaged! How delightful! I shall love her dearly—my sister Caroline." Violet is never weary of exercising her new-found rights of relationship; and Edward thinks those the sweetest words ever spoken, and kisses Violet for having said them. Then Violet calls, "Father!"—and with what a loving, lingering tone the word falls from her lips! Capt. Ross comes at the call, and

bears a somewhat more succinct account of Edward's engagement. He is evidently gratified, yet he says, "You are very young, Edward; not too young for an engagement, — but for marriage —"

"I am twenty-two, father."

"Just, my son; — but what does Mr. Peyton say?"

"He was very kind — he did say something about waiting a year; but I think, if you took my part, father, his scruples would soon be overcome."

"But I am not sure I can take your part; I should not like my daughter to marry one who had yet to begin life. Begin the work of a man, and we must accord you the rights of a man."

"Well, set me my task, father! If Caroline is to be the prize, I think I can do it."

"Suppose it should be to leave her, and go back to the plantation, and live a lonely life there this winter; carrying out the reforms that I planned and began for the people?"

"And where will you be, father?"

"In that case, I might remain here with Violet, till she is ready to sail for England in the spring."

"But, father —" Violet begins. Capt. Ross checks her. "Hush! let us hear what Edward has to say," he cries.

Edward hesitates. "Father," he says, "I must have some higher motive of action than merely to prove myself a man."

"I will give it to you, Edward. It is, to make men and women of those whom God committed to our care, and whom I found debased to the condition of brutes. I take shame to myself, Edward, for fulfilling my responsibilities to them so ill. I want to see you begin early to do what I have left so long undone, wasting in selfish regrets powers that might have blessed many."

"O, father! I cannot bear to hear you accuse yourself so unjustly!" said Violet, who had been kissing his hand with tender reverence while he spoke.

"It is true, my child; if you saw my poor people, you would feel how true."

"Then let us all work for them this winter. Why should the work be all Edward's? Am I not your child, too?"

She was answered by a kiss, and a "What would Mr. Devereux say?"

"I am sure he would say I was quite right. I will ask him. Call him, Edward."

"First give me your answer, my son. Can you ask a nobler work?"

"None, father. It is sacred, and I am ready to devote myself to it for life; but, father, it is not good for man to be alone. I want a helpmeet in my work. I want Caroline's bright spirit to support me."

Capt. Ross was not displeased. He saw that Edward showed a man's thoughtfulness rather than a boy's impetuosity; but he only said, "Well; call Mr. Devereux, and let Violet ask her question."

Mr. Devereux came. He had been looking with a longing eye, for some minutes, to this room and its family group. "Violet wishes to speak to you," said Edward; and, placing himself at her side, and taking her hand, he turned to her a smiling face, bidding her, "Say on!"

Capt. Ross saw, with a little amusement, the hesitation that came over her as she looked in his face. All smiling as it was, there was something in it which made her feel that she was his now, and that her decisions must be sanctioned by him before they were effectual. Nor did any feeling in her heart rise up in opposition to this. Rather did she think how noble her life would be, thus making part of his, — "setting herself to him like music to noble words," as Tennyson has said, in the noblest description ever traced by human pen of man's and woman's conjoint influence.

"Have you been plotting treason, and are afraid to tell me of it?" he asked, still smiling, as he saw her hesitation.

"No, indeed! I have been proposing to do something

to which my father thought you might object, but which I am sure you will think quite right."

"Let me hear it."

"Well, do you not think I am just as much bound to help my father — to do what I can to relieve him if he is in any trouble — as Edward is? Don't laugh, Edward! I am sure I mean what I say very seriously."

"And I will answer it as seriously," said Mr. Devereux, composing his countenance to the most perfect gravity. "You have stated a proposition which, in its abstract form, cannot be disputed; but circumstances alter cases; and the limiting circumstances in your case and Edward's may be very unlike."

"No, they are not at all unlike. Edward is engaged to a very lovely young lady of Virginia, — Miss Peyton ——"

"I congratulate him,"— with a smiling glance at Edward; "but, so far, it is my circumstances, not yours, that are like Edward's."

"But I only mentioned that to show how great a sacrifice he must make in complying with my father's wish that he should go to the island, and devote himself to the people there for a year, before his marriage."

"And do you want to share Edward's sacrifice, and go to the island, and devote yourself to the people there for a year, before your marriage?"

"Certainly not!" and Violet colored slightly, and drew herself up, with some feeling that the extreme simplicity of Mr. Devereux's manner disguised a laugh at her expense. "I did not think of such a thing; but, as I know that you do not intend sailing for England till May next, I wished to do something, in the intervening time, to help my father, and benefit his poor people, who have some claim on me, too."

"Do it. Do all you wish. The postponing your marriage does not come within that limit, I hope."

"But the question is not what I wish. If I should go South ——"

"I must, of course, go with you."

"And will you go? Will you go, and spend three or four months in what my father says is the loneliest place in the world?"

"If I do, you will certainly be bound to recompense me for such an act of heroic self-sacrifice by the most unparalleled devotion."

"Do be serious!"

"I never was more serious in my life."

She glanced around, a little annoyed that her father and Edward should have heard of this proposed recompense; but they had vanished.

"Well, is it a bargain?" asked Mr. Devereux, throwing his arm around her, and bringing her back to the seat from which she had risen on finding they were alone.

She replied with another question, — "Will you go?"

"Yes, on the conditions stated."

"And when?"

"When Dr. Jamieson says that you may go with safety, and you give me the right to be your travelling companion."

"O! as to my going with safety, nothing will do me so much good as a quiet journey with my father and brother, and — and you. Dear, dear Edward! it is so sweet to say 'my brother'!"

"Very sweet, no doubt; but it must not carry us off from the topic in question. You have answered for Dr. Jamieson's approval. Now, when am I to have the right to become your travelling companion?"

"I think, with my father in company, we might go ——"

"Excuse me for interrupting you, but I could not possibly consent to such an indecorum as travelling with you before our marriage; so every day you postpone that, will be a day taken from your work on the island; and, my

dear Violet," dropping his jesting tone, and addressing her very earnestly, "what have you to set against what must now be your father's and brother's wish, as well as mine? Here is the twentieth of December. Your visit to the South must be short, at the best. Suppose you permit me to say to Mr. Merton that we shall need his services on Christmas day? I will send my man to him with the letter, that there may be no delay."

We need not further record Mr. Devereux's pleadings. Violet could not resist them when backed by her father's approval and Edward's entreaty, this last having been incited by the understanding that so early a departure from New York would enable them to stop for a few days in Richmond, and give Capt. Ross and Violet an opportunity to become acquainted with the future daughter and sister.

No brighter sun ever rose than that which gilded this Christmas morning. Nine o'clock had been appointed for the marriage, an hour which would not interfere with the public services of the day; and, punctually at that hour, the carriages containing the bridal party and their friends drew up at the door of the church. As usual on such occasions, a number of the passing crowd had been induced by curiosity to enter after them; and few of these strangers ever forgot the vision of beauty, in floating white draperies, which swept down the long aisle from the vestry to the altar, leaning on the arm of a grave but handsome elderly gentleman. Even the rich brocade of white and silver, and the flowing point-lace veil, were unnoticed while the gaze was concentrated upon that face of exquisite loveliness, where every human feeling seemed chastened and spiritualized by the devout reverence due to the place and to the occasion. For an instant, as she saw the numbers in the church, her eyes fell, and her cheek flushed; but she grew calm and strong again, as the bridegroom, with a face grave from the very intensity of his joy, placed himself at her side. From that moment she was conscious of no pres-

ence but his, that of the holy man who received their vows, and of the invisible Being before whom they were made. Her voice, soft but rich, fell clearly on the ears of all within the building, as she uttered her emphatic "I will," or followed the clergyman in the solemn form of words which bound her, through all the changes and chances of life, till death should them part. Nor were the deep organ-tones of him whom she had accepted as her earthly lord and king less impressive. Under the influence of their solemn earnestness of tone and manner, those who had come for amusement only, found some deeper and holier sympathies awakened in their hearts.

The travellers were to set out for Philadelphia, in the rail-cars, at two o'clock. Mr. Devereux's man and Violet's maid preceded them by some hours, with the greater part of their baggage, that they might make all necessary arrangements for their comfort at the hotel in Philadelphia. They had delayed for a special purpose. It was their earnest desire to join in the services which their church regards as appropriate to Christmas; and the scene of the morning seemed to Violet to acquire new sanctity as she knelt between her husband and her father in the commemoration of the most solemn rite of our holy faith. She was too humble to feel, what was yet true — that the rebellious spirit of the one had been subdued, and the slumbering conscience of the other awakened, through the silent influence of her example.

The promise which Mr. Merton had made to her childhood had been more than fulfilled. Earth is not heaven to the most humble and submissive spirit; — crosses doubtless still lay in her path, but she had learned how to transmute them into the richest blessings. Obediently, reverently, she would take them up; and, though her frail humanity should sink beneath them, they would but add to the glory of that heavenly crown whose light seemed even now to rest upon her pure and peaceful brow.

To gratify Edward, Capt. Ross hastened on with him to Mr. Peyton's, leaving Mr. Devereux and Violet to travel at the slower rate which her not yet entirely restored strength made necessary. At Philadelphia they left rail-cars behind them, and must depend on the slow and somewhat wearisome stage-coaches, or on their own carriage. Mr. Devereux preferred the last, and remained in Philadelphia long enough to find a convenient and comfortable carriage, and a strong, serviceable pair of horses. With these they arrived in Richmond a week after Capt. Ross and Edward. They all remained a week longer at Mr. Peyton's. They were charmed with Caroline, who was not the less agreeable, perhaps, for having her gay, free spirit somewhat subdued by her new relations. To Capt. Ross she was studiously and respectfully attentive; to Violet, affectionate, lavishing upon her, it may be, some of those demonstrations of feeling which she would not make to Edward. On him she sometimes practised still her talent of tormenting. After many consultations between the elders, much pleading on Edward's part, and some on Violet's, who wished to see her brother married before she left America, Caroline consented to appoint the first week in May for her marriage.

"Four long months still, Caroline!" said Edward, not quite satisfied with the concession he had won.

"Only four months!" she exclaimed. "I shall hardly be able to bring half the flirtations I have on hand to a graceful conclusion in that time."

But there was a sweet seriousness in her manner, which was far more engaging, when she listened to Capt. Ross, who talked much to her of his anxieties respecting his people, and his plans for their future improvement and comfort.

"I tell you these things, my dear," he said to her, one morning, as they were taking a tête-à-tête walk, "because,

on you and Edward their accomplishment must mainly depend."

"You will not, I hope, sir, give up your country entirely, when Mrs. Devereux leaves us. Your son —" She stopped, a little embarrassed at finding herself pleading Edward's cause.

"No, my dear; my lot has been appointed here, and I must not desert my post, though my leisure time will probably be spent in England; and when I grow too old or too infirm for travel, should such a time ever come, it is in England, and with my Violet, that I should like to sink to my last rest."

"I hope, before that time, sir, you will have learned to feel that you have two daughters," said Caroline, with unusual softness and gentleness of manner.

"Thank you, my dear! I am sure I shall. It was no doubt of that which made me say what I did."

Capt. Ross walked on in silent and sad musing. He was thinking of that lonely grave, never long out of his mind, and of the precious dust it held, which he had determined to bear to England, there to mingle with kindred dust, and beside which he hoped one day to take his own place.

The winter passed quickly away in the labor of love which Capt. Ross had planned for himself and his children. They made one visit to kind Mrs. Baillie, who welcomed Violet with tears of joy. They found Harrington, whom Capt. Ross had sent home by land, exalted into a hero by his extraordinary adventures, and his exaggerated account of the prowess he had displayed in them. But nothing in the visit gave Violet so much pleasure as seeing the change which had come over Louisa. Violet had won a high place in her warm, generous heart; and, in her grief at their separation, and at Violet's danger and suffering, she gave a deference to her opinions which might have been withheld under other circumstances. With her quick impulses, she had begun to teach her sisters before the news of Vio-

let's safety reached her. It was begun as a sacrifice to her friend's memory,—it was continued from interest in the employment; and it had banished the slight shade of discontent from her spirit. She was satisfied with her home.

It would be pleasant to linger on the records of Violet's life on the island that winter, blessing and blessed; but other scenes demand our attention, and we hasten on. We must not even pause to describe the old-fashioned family wedding, at Peytonville, in May. Immediately after it, Mr. and Mrs. Devereux took leave of their friends, and embarked for England. Capt. Ross was to follow them in the course of the summer. He wished to be alone when bearing his wife's remains to their last resting-place. His thoughts must be all hers, then. Violet suspected his motive for delay, and was greatly pained at leaving him; but Mr. Devereux understood the reserve of Capt. Ross better than she could do, and she was persuaded by him not even to urge her own wishes. To part with Edward for an uncertain period was a deeper pang; but, with such brightness around her, she dared not suffer her eye to rest long on this one cloud.

And now, the voyage past, they stand upon the green shores of England — England, the mother of nations. They are expected at Oakdale Priory, and they hasten on, stopping only for needful rest. Glimpses of much that is beautiful Violet catches as they pass along — glimpses only; their hearts are too full of the home that is awaiting them to dwell on these.

They enter Mr. Devereux's domain. Their road winds through the park, leading them now under the broad oaks, now beside the sylvan lake, of Mr. Devereux's sketches. He has drawn Violet close to his side, so close that she feels the throbbings of his full heart. She turns from the landscape to his face. It is pale, and the brow is contracted,

as if with pain; for the shadow of a wasted past was falling chill and sad across the present sunlight. She lays her hand in his, and softly, timidly whispers, "My husband!"

Bending down and kissing tenderly the sweet face uplifted to his, he exclaims, "God be thanked for my precious Violet! my wife! his 'last, best gift,' who has taught me to value all his other gifts!"

She bows her head, till it is hidden on his shoulder, as she whispers, "Thank him for me, too; for your happy Violet!"

"Our lives shall thank him; and you will help me, my Violet, to redeem the time I have wasted."

Before she can answer, the bells are ringing out a merry peal, and glad human voices are shouting a welcome home, and the house is before them which is to be the scene of their future joys and sorrows. Something of awe steals over Violet's soul as she enters it. There children shall be born to her; she carries the germ of that sweet hope even now near her heart. There, it may be, children shall die from her side; in those halls she shall see marriage festivals; from those doors shall pass funeral processions; and all these shall be a part of her own life. Mr. Devereux feels her tremble as she leans upon him; he breaks from the congratulations of his assembled tenantry and dependants, promising to return to them again, and leads her through the wide hall, and up the broad oak stairs, to the room prepared, according to written directions forwarded from America, for her dressing-room. When she is able to look around her, to take in the sunny landscape from its windows, to see the arrangements for her comfort; to mark how her taste has been consulted in every detail; how her lightest wish, most casually expressed, has been remembered; especially when she studies the three pictures that adorn its walls, painted by Coles, from pencil-sketches furnished by Mr. Devereux, representing the wrecker's home at Squan Beach, a view of Ross Hall, with its pretty lake,

and another of the island home of Capt. Ross, she will find new cause for thankfulness and joy. But now she sees nothing of all this. Her heart is full of strangely mingled emotions, — joy too great for expression, awe, as she looks forward from the portal of this new life, on its responsibilities, its hopes, its fears. Her face is very pale, and Mr. Devereux, having taken off her bonnet, bears her in his arms to a window, that she may feel the gentle summer breeze. But she turns from its sweet, reviving breath, to hide her fast-flowing tears upon his bosom.

"What! weeping, my Violet?" he asks, half-reproachfully.

"O, my husband! I am afraid! I am afraid!"

"Afraid? Of whom? Of what, my darling?"

"Of myself; that I shall forget the Giver, in His gifts — that ——"

"My Violet! is not the same ear open to your cry here, that heard you amid the raging of the sea, and on the desolate beach?"

"O! let us pray to Him, my husband! let us pray to Him!"

She glided to her knees as she spoke, and, still supporting her with his arm, and clasping in his hand one of hers, Mr. Devereux knelt beside her, and, mingling his prayer with thanksgiving and praise, asked the protection and guidance of the great Father of all, for the sake of Him who died that we might live.

There we leave them, close to the heart of everlasting love, — the only safe place for frail humanity.

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